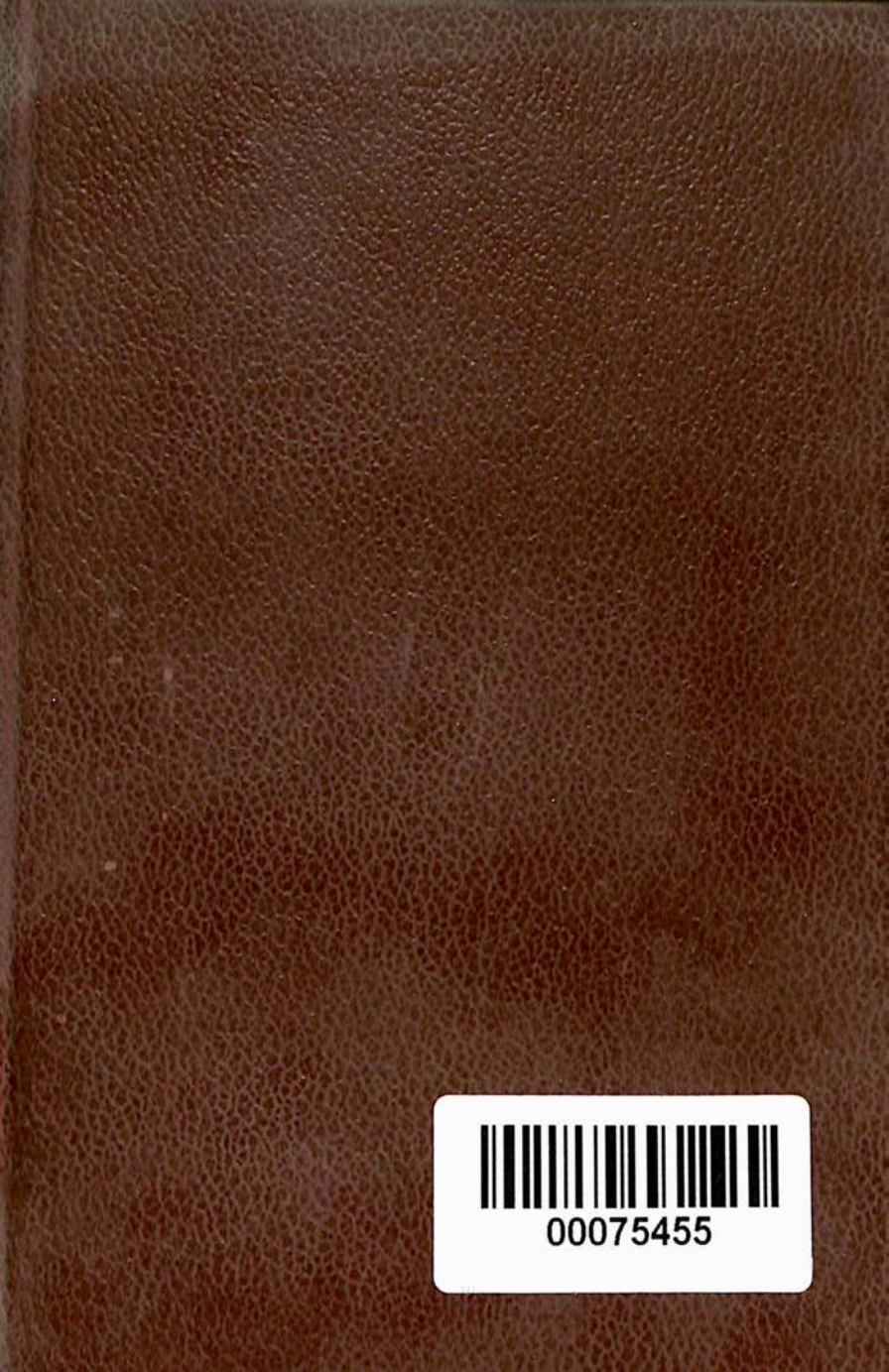
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MARY ANERLEY

A YORKSHIRE TALE.

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BY

R. D. BLACKMORE,

AUTHOR OF "ALICE LORRAINE," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

FACT OR FACTOR 1

CHAPTER II.

THE DEMON OF THE AXE 18

CHAPTER III.

BATTERY AND ASSUMPSIT 31

CHAPTER IV.

STORMY GAP 48

CHAPTER V.

BAT OF THE GILL 67

CHAPTER VI.

A CLUE OF BUTTONS 81

CHAPTER VII.

A PLEASANT INTERVIEW 94

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD 106

CHAPTER IX.

THE THING IS JUST 121

CHAPTER X.

STUMPED OUT 135

CHAPTER XI.

PAGE

A Tangle of Veins 152

CHAPTER XII.

Short Sighs, and Long Ones 172

CHAPTER XIII.

A Bold Angler 188

CHAPTER XIV.

Princely Treatment 201

CHAPTER XV.

Stand and Deliver 212

CHAPTER XVI.

The Scarfe 227

CHAPTER XVII.

Buts Rebutted 237

CHAPTER XVIII.

True Love 250

CHAPTER XIX.

Nicholas, the Fish 264

CHAPTER XX.

In the thick of it 281

CHAPTER XXI.

Mary Lyth 291

MARY ANERLEY.

CHAPTER I.

FACT, OR FACTOR.

"PAPA, I have brought you a wonderful letter," cried Miss Janetta Upround, towards supper-time of that same night; "and the most miraculous thing about it is, that there is no post to pay. Oh, how stupid I am! I ought to have got at least a shilling out of you for postage."

"My dear, be sorry for your sins, and not for having failed to add to them. Our little world is brimful of news just now; but nearly all of it bad news. Why, bless me, this is in regular print, and it never has passed through the post at all, which explains the most astounding fact of positively nought to pay. Janetta, every day I congratulate myself upon such a wondrous daughter. But I never could have hoped that even you would bring me a letter gratis."

"But the worst of it is, that I deserve no credit. If I had cheated the postman, there would have been something to be proud of. But this letter came in the most ignominious way—poked under the gate, papa! It is sealed with a foreign coin! Oh dear, dear, I am all in a tingle to know all about it. I saw it by the moonlight, and it must belong to me."

"My dear, it says—'private, and to his own hands.' Therefore you had better go, and think no more about it. I confide to you many of my business matters; or at any rate you get them out of me; but this being private, you must think no more about it."

"Darling papa, what a flagrant shame! The man must have done it with no other object than to rob me of every wink of sleep. If I swallow the outrage and retire, will you promise to tell me every word to-morrow? You preached a most exquisite sermon last Sunday, about the meanness and futility of small concealments."

"Be off!" cried the rector; "you are worse than Mr. Mordacks, who lays down the law about frankness perpetually, but never lets me guess what his own purpose is."

"Oh, now I see where the infection comes from! Papa, I am off, for fear of catching it myself. Don't tell me, whatever you do. I never can sleep upon dark mysteries."

"Poor dear, you shall not have your rest

disturbed," Dr. Upround said sweetly, as he closed the door behind her; "you are much too good a girl for other people's plagues to visit you." Then as he saddled his pleasant old nose with the tranquil span of spectacles, the smile on his lips, and the sigh of his breast arrived at a quiet little compromise. He was proud of his daughter, her quickness and power to get the upper turn of words with him; but he grieved at her not having any deep impressions, even after his very best sermons. But her mother always told him not to be in any hurry, for even she herself had felt no very profound impressions, until she married a clergyman; and that argument always made him smile (as invisibly as possible) because he had not detected yet their existence in his better half. Such questions are most delicate, and a husband can only set mute example. A father, on the other hand, is bound to use his pastoral crook upon his children foremost.

"Now for this letter," said Dr. Upround, holding council with himself; "evidently a good clerk, and perhaps a first-rate scholar. One of the very best Greek scholars of the age, does all his manuscript in printing hand, when he wishes it to be legible. And a capital plan it is, without meaning any pun. I can read this like a Gazette itself.

"Reverend and worshipful Sir,—Your long and highly valued kindness requires

at least a word from me, before I leave this country. I have not ventured into your presence, because it might place you in a very grave predicament. Your duty to King and State might compel you with your own hand to arrest me; and against your hand I could not strive. The evidence brought before you, left no choice, but to issue a warrant against me, though it grieved your kind heart to do that same. Sir, I am purely innocent of the vile crime laid against me. I used no fire-arm that night, neither did any of my men. And it is for their sake, as well as my own, that I now take the liberty of writing this. Failing of me, the authorities may bring my comrades to trial, and convict them. If that were so, it would become my duty as a man to surrender myself, and meet my death in the hope of saving them. But if the case is sifted properly, they must be acquitted; for no fire-arm of any kind was in my boat, except one pair of pistols, in a locker under the after-thwart, and they happened to be unloaded. I pray you to verify this, kind sir. My firm belief is that the Revenue Officer was shot by one of his own men; and his widow has the same opinion. I hear that the wound was in the back of the head. If we had carried fire-arms, not one of us could have shot him so.

"It may have been an accident; I cannot say. Even so, the man, whose mishap it

was, is not likely to acknowledge it. And I know that in a court of law, truth must be paid for dearly. I venture to commit to your good hands a draught upon a well-known Holland firm, which amounts to £78 British, for the defence of the men who are in custody. I know that you as a magistrate, cannot come forward as their defender; but I beg you as a friend of justice to place the money for their benefit. Also especially to direct attention to the crew of the Revenue-boat and their guns.

"And now I fear greatly to encroach upon your kindness, and very long-suffering good-will towards me. But I have brought into sad trouble and distress with her family—who are most obstinate people—and with the opinion of the public, I suppose, a young lady worth more than all the goods I ever ran, or ever could run, if I went on for fifty years. By name she is Mistress Mary Anerley, and by birth the daughter of Captain Anerley, of Anerley farm, outside our parish. If your reverence could only manage to ride round that way upon coming home from Sessions, once or twice in the fine weather, and to say a kind word or two to my Mary, and a good word, if any can be said of me, to her parents, who are stiff but worthy people, it would be a truly Christian act, and such as you delight in, on this side of the Dane-dyke.

"Reverend sir, I must now say farewell.

From you I have learned almost everything I know, within the pale of statutes, which repeal one another continually. I have wandered sadly outside that pale, and now I pay the penalty. If I had only paid heed to your advice, and started in business with the capital acquired by free-trade, and got it properly protected, I might have been able to support my parents, and even be Churchwarden of Flamborough. You always told me that my unlawful enterprise must close in sadness; and your words have proved too true. But I never expected anything like this; and I do not understand it yet. A penetrating mind like yours, with all the advantages of authority, even that is likely to be baffled in such a difficult case as this.

"Reverend sir, my case is hard; for I always have laboured to establish peaceful trade; and I must have succeeded again, if honour had guided all my followers. We always relied upon the Coast-guard to be too late for any mischief; and so they would have been this time, if their acts had been straightforward. In sorrow and lowness of fortune, I remain, with humble respect and gratitude, Your worship's poor pupil and banished parishioner—Robin Lyth, of Flamborough."

"Come now, Robin," Dr. Upround said, as soon as he had well considered this epistle; "I have put up with many a checkmate at your hands; but not without the fair

delight of a counter-stroke at the enemy. Here you afford me none of that. You are my master in every way; and quietly you make me make your moves, quite as if I were the black in a problem. You leave me to conduct your fellow smugglers' case, to look after your sweetheart, and to make myself generally useful. By the way, that touch about my pleading his cause in my riding-boots, and with a sessional air about me, is worthy of the great Verdoni. Neither is that a bad hit about my Christianity stopping at the Dane-dyke. Certes, I shall have to call on that young lady; though from what I have heard of the sturdy farmer, I may both ride and reason long, even after my greatest exploits at the Sessions, without converting him to free-trade; and trebly so, after that deplorable affair. I wonder whether we shall ever get to the bottom of that mystery. How often have I warned the boy that mischief was quite sure to come! though I never even dreamed that it would be so bad as this."

Since Dr. Upround first came to Flamborough, nothing (not even the infliction of his nickname) had grieved him so deeply as the sad death of Carroway. From the first he felt certain that his own people were guiltless of any share in it. But his heart misgave him as to distant smugglers, men who came from afar free-booting, bringing

over ocean woes to men of settlement, good tithe-payers. For such men (plainly of foreign breed, and very plain specimens of it) had not at all succeeded in eluding observation, in a neighbourhood where they could have no honest calling. Flamborough had called to witness Filey, and Filey had attested Bridlington, that a stranger on horse-back had appeared among them, with a purpose obscurely evil. They were right enough as to the fact, although the purpose was not evil, as little Denmark even now began to own.

"Here I am again!" cried Mr. Mordacks, laying vehement hold of the rector's hand, upon the following morning; "just arrived from York, dear sir, after riding half the night, and going anywhere you please; except perhaps where you would like to send me, if charity and Christian courtesy allowed. My dear sir, have you heard the news? I perceive by your countenance that you have not. Ah, you are generally benighted in these parts. Your caves have got something to do with it. The mind gets accustomed to them."

"I venture to think, Mr. Mordacks, on the whole," said the rector, who studied this man gently; "that sometimes you are rapid in your conclusions. Possibly of the two extremes it is the more desirable; especially in these parts, because of its great rarity. Still the mere fact of some caves existing, in

or out of my parish, whichever it may be, scarcely seems to prove that all the people of Flamborough live in them. And even if we did, it was the manner of the ancient seers, both in the Classics, and in Holy Writ—"

"Sir, I know all about Elijah and Obadiah, and the rest of them. Profane literature we leave now for Clerks in Holy Orders—we positively have no time for it. Everything begins to move with accelerated pace. This is a new century, and it means to make its mark. It begins very badly; but it will go on all the better. And I hope to have the pleasure, at a very early day, of showing you one of its leading men, a man of large intellect, commanding character, the most magnificent principles—and in short, lots of money. You must be quite familiar with the name of Sir Duncan Yordas."

"I fancy that I have heard, or seen it somewhere. Oh, something to do with the Hindoos, or the Africans. I never pay much attention to such things."

"Neither do I, Dr. Upround. Still somebody must, and a lot of money comes of it. Their idols have diamond eyes, which purity of worship compels us to confiscate. And there are many other ways of getting on among them, while wafting and expanding them into a higher sphere of thought. The mere fact of Sir Duncan having feathered his

nest—pardon so vulgar an expression, Doctor—proves that while giving, we may also receive—for which we have the highest warranty."

"The labourer is worthy of his hire, Mr. Mordacks. At the same time we should remember also —"

"What St. Paul says per contra. Quite so. That is always my first consideration, when I work for my employers. Ah, Dr. Upround, few men give such pure service as your humble servant. I have twice had the honour of handing you my card. If ever you fall into any difficulty, where zeal, fidelity, and high principle, combined with very low charges—"

"Mr. Mordacks, my opinion of you is too high, for even yourself to add to it. But what has this Sir Duncan Yorick—"

"Yordas, my dear sir—Sir Duncan Yordas—the oldest family in Yorkshire. Men of great power, both for good and evil, mainly, perhaps, the latter. It has struck me sometimes that the county takes its name—but etymology is not my forte. What has he to do with us, you ask? Sir, I will answer you most frankly. 'Coram populo' is my business motto. Excuse me, I think I hear that door creak. No, a mere fancy—we are quite 'in camerâ.' Very well; Reverend sir, prepare your mind for a highly astounding disclosure."

"I have lived too long to be astounded,

my good sir. But allow me to put on my spectacles. Now I am prepared for almost anything."

"Dr. Upround, my duty compels me to enter largely into minds. Your mind is of a lofty order—calm, philosophic, benevolent. You have proved this by your kind reception of me, a stranger, almost an intruder. You have judged from my manners and appearance, which are shaped considerably by the inner man, that my object was good, large, noble. And yet you have not been quite able to refrain, at weak moments perhaps, but still a dozen times a day, from exclaiming in the commune of your heart, 'What the devil does this man want, in my parish?'"

"My good sir, I never use bad language; and if I did my duty, I should now inflict—"

"Five shillings for your poor-box. There it is. And it serves me quite right for being too explicit, and forgetting my reverence to the cloth. However I have coarsely expressed your thoughts. Also you have frequently said to yourself, 'This man prates of openness, but I find him closer than any oyster.' Am I right? Yes, I see that I am, by your bow. Very well, you may suppose what pain it gave me, to have the privilege of intercourse with a perfect gentleman, and an eloquent divine, and yet feel myself in an ambiguous position. In a few words I will

clear myself, being now at liberty to indulge that pleasure. I have been here, as agent for Sir Duncan Yordas; to follow up the long-lost clue to his son, and only child, who for very many years was believed to be out of all human pursuit. My sanguine and penetrating mind scorned rumours, and went in for certainty. I have found Sir Duncan's son, and am able to identify him, beyond all doubt, as a certain young man well known to you, and perhaps too widely known, by the name of Robin Lyth."

In spite of the length of his experience of the world, in a place of so many adventures, the rector of Flamborough was astonished, and perhaps a little vexed as well. If anything was to be found out, in such a headlong way, about one of his parishioners, and notably such a pet pupil and favourite, the proper thing would have been that he himself should do it. Failing that, he should at least have been consulted, enlisted, or at any rate apprised of what was toward. But instead of that, here he had been hood-winked (by this marvel of incarnate candour) employed in the dark about several little things, and then suddenly enlightened, when the job was done. Gentle, and void of self-importance as he was, it misliked him to be treated so.

"This is a wonderful piece of news," he said, as he fixed a calm gaze upon the keen, hard eyes of Mordacks; "you understand

your business, sir, and would not make such a statement, unless you could verify it. But I hope that you may not find cause to regret that you have treated me with so little confidence."

"I am not open to that reproach. Dr. Upround, consider my instructions. I was strictly forbidden to disclose my object, until certainty should be obtained. That being done, I have hastened to apprise you first of a result which is partly due to your own good offices. Shake hands, my dear sir, and acquit me of rudeness—the last thing of which I am capable."

The rector was mollified, and gave his hand to the gallant general factor. "Allow me to add my congratulations upon your wonderful success," he said; "but would that I had known it some few hours sooner! It might have saved you a vast amount of trouble. I might have kept Robin well within your reach. I fear that he is now beyond it."

"I am grieved to hear you say so. But according to my last instructions, although he is in strict concealment, I can lay hands upon him, when the time is ripe."

"I fear not. He sailed last night for the continent, which is a vague destination, especially in such times as these. But perhaps that was part of your skilful contrivance."

"Not so. And for the time it throws me

out. I have kept most careful watch on him. But the difficulty was that he might confound my vigilance with that of his enemies. Take me for a constable, I mean. And perhaps he has done so after all. Things have gone luckily for me in the main; but that murder came in most unseasonably. It was the very thing that should have been avoided. Sir Duncan will need all his influence there. Suppose for a moment that young Robin did not do it—"

"Mr. Mordacks, you frighten me. What else could you suppose?"

"Certainly—yes. A parishioner of yours, when not engaged unlawfully upon the high seas. We heartily hope that he did not do it, and we give him the benefit of the doubt; in which I shared largely, until it became so manifest that he was a Yordas. A Yordas has made a point of slaying his man—and sometimes from three to a dozen men—until within the last two generations. In the third generation the law revives, as is hinted, I think, in the Decalogue. In my professional course a large stock of hereditary trail—so to speak—comes before me. Some families always drink, some always steal, some never tell lies because they never know a falsehood, some would sell their souls for a sixpence, and these are the most respectable of any—"

"My dear sir, my dear sir, I beg your pardon for interrupting you; but in my house

the rule is to speak well of people, or else to say nothing about them."

"Then you must resign your commission, Doctor; for how can you take depositions? But, as I was saying, I should have some hope of the innocence of young Robin, if it should turn out that his father, Sir Duncan, has destroyed a good many of the native race in India. It may reasonably be hoped that he has done so, which would tend very strongly to exonerate his son. But the evidence laid before your worship, and before the coroner was black—black—black."

"My position forbids me to express opinions. The evidence compelled me to issue the warrant. But knowing your position I may show you this, in every word of which I have perfect faith."

With these words Dr. Upround produced the letter which he had received last night, and the general factor took in all the gist of it in less than half a minute.

"Very good! very good!" he said with a smile of experienced benevolence. "We believe some of it. Our duty is to do so. There are two points of importance in it. One as to the girl he is in love with, and the other his kind liberality to the fellows who will have to bear the brunt of it."

"You speak sarcastically, and I hope unfairly. To my mind the most important part facts are these—that poor Carroway was shot

from behind, and that the smugglers had no fire-arms, except two pistols, both unloaded."

"Who is to prove that, Dr. Uproud? Their mouths are closed; and if they were open, would anybody believe them? We knew long ago that the vigilant and deservedly lamented officer took the death-blow from behind; but of that how simple is the explanation! The most intelligent of his crew, and apparently his best subordinate, whose name is John Cadman, deposes that his lamented chief turned round for one moment to give an order, and during that moment received the shot. His evidence is the more weighty, because he does not go too far with it. He does not pretend to say who fired. He knows only that one of the smugglers did. His evidence will hang those six poor fellows, from the laudable desire of the law to include the right one. But I trust that the right one will be far away."

"I trust not. If even one of them is condemned, even to transportation, Robin Lyth will surrender immediately. You doubt it. You smile at the idea. Your opinion of human nature is low. Mine is not enthusiastic. But I judge others by myself."

"So do I," Mr. Mordacks answered with a smile of curious humour. And the rector could not help smiling too, at this instance of genuine candour. "However, not to go too deeply into that," his visitor continued, "there really is one point in Robin's letter which de-

mands inquiry. I mean about the guns of the Preventive men. Cadman may be a rogue. Most probably he is. None of the others confirm, although they do not contradict him. Do you know anything about him?"

"Only villany—in another way. He led away a nice girl of this parish, an industrious mussel-gatherer. And he then had a wife and large family of his own, of which the poor thing knew nothing. Her father nearly killed him; and I was compelled (very much against my will) to inflict a penalty. Cadman is very shy of Flamborough now. By the way, have you called upon poor Widow Carroway?"

"I thank you for the hint. She is the very person. It will be a sad intrusion; and I have put it off as long as possible. After what Robin says, it is most important. I hope that Sir Duncan will be here very shortly. He is coming from Yarmouth in his own yacht. Matters are crowding upon me very fast. I will see Mrs. Carroway, as soon as it is decent. Good morning, and best thanks to your Worship."

CHAPTER II.

THE DEMON OF THE AXE.

THE air was sad and heavy thus, with discord, doubt, and death itself, gathering and decending, like the clouds of long night, upon Flamborough. But far away among the mountains, and the dreary moorland, the "intake" of the coming winter, was a great deal worse to see. For here no blink of the sea came up, no sunlight under the sill of clouds (as happens where wide waters are) but rather a dark rim of brooding on the rough horizon, seemed to thicken itself against the light under the sullen march of vapours—the muffled funeral of the year. Dry trees and naked crags stood forth, and the dirge of the wind went to and fro, and there was no comfort out of doors.

Soon the first snow of the winter came, the first abiding earnest snow, for several skits had come before, and ribbed with white the mountain breasts. But nobody took much heed of that, except to lean over the plough, while

it might be sped, or to want more breakfast. Well resigned was everybody to the stoppage of work by winter. It was only what must be every year, and a gracious provision of Providence. If a man earned very little money, that was against him in one way, but encouraged him in another. It brought home to his mind the surety that others would be kind to him; not with any sense of gift, but a large goodwill of sharing.

But the first snow that visits the day, and does not melt in its own cold tears, is a sterner sign for every one. The hardened wrinkle, and the herring-bone of white that runs among the brown fern-fronds, the crisp defiant dazzle on the walks, and the crust that glitters on the patient branch, and the crest curling under the heel of a gate, and the ridge piled up against the tool-house door, these, and the shivering wind that spreads them, tell of a bitter time in store.

The ladies of Scargate Hall looked out upon such a December afternoon. The massive walls of their house defied all sudden change of temperature, and nothing less than a week of rigour pierced the comfort of their rooms. The polished oak-beams overhead glanced back the merry fire-glow, the painted walls shone with rosy tints, and warm lights flitting along them, and the thick-piled carpet yielded back a velvety sense of luxury. It was nice to see how bleak the crags were,

and the sad trees labouring beneath the wind and snow.

"If it were not for thinking of the poor cold people, for whom one feels so deeply," said the gentle Mrs. Carnaby, with a sweet soft sigh, "one would rather enjoy this dreary prospect. I hope there will be a deep snow to-night. There is every sign of it upon the scaurs. And then, Philippa, only think—no post, no plague of news, no prospect of even that odious Jellicorse! Once more, we shall have our meals in quiet."

Mrs. Carnaby loved a good dinner right well, a dinner unplagued by hospitable cares; when a woodcock was her own to dwell on, and pretty little teeth might pick a pretty little bone at ease.

"Eliza, you are always such a creature of the moment," Mistress Yordas answered indulgently; "you do love the good things of the world too much. How would you like to be out there, in a naked little cottage where the wind howls through, and the ewer is frozen every morning? And where, if you ever get anything to eat—"

"Philippa, I implore you not to be so dreadful. One never can utter the most commonplace reflection—and you know that I said, I was sorry for the people."

"My object is good, as you ought to know. My object is to habituate your mind—"

"Philippa, I beg you once more to confine

your exertions, in that way, to your own more lofty mind. Again I refuse to have my mind, or whatever it is that does duty for it, habituated to anything. A gracious Providence knows that I should die outright, after all my blameless life, if reduced to those horrible straits you always picture. And I have too much faith in a gracious Providence, to conceive for one moment, that it would treat me so. I decline the subject. Why should we make such troubles? There is clear soup for dinner, and some lovely sweetbreads. Cook has got a new receipt for bread-sauce, and Jordas says that he never did shoot such a woodcock."

"Eliza, I trust that you may enjoy them all, your appetite is delicate, and you require nourishment. Why, what do I see over yonder, in the snow? A slim figure moving at a very great pace, and avoiding the open places! Are my eyes growing old, or is it Lancelot?"

"Pet out in such weather, Philippa! Such a thing is simply impossible. Or at any rate I should hope so. You know that Jordas was obliged to put a set of curtains from end to end even of the bowling alley, which is so beautifully sheltered; and even then poor Pet was sneezing. And you should have heard what he said to me, when I was afraid of the sheets taking fire from his warming-pan one night. Pet is unaccountable sometimes, I know. But the very last thing imaginable of

him is, that he should put his pretty feet into the snow."

"You know him best, Eliza; and it is very puzzling to distinguish things in snow. But if it was not Pet, why it must have been a squirrel."

"The squirrels are gone to sleep for the winter, Philippa. I dare say it was only Jordas. Don't you think that it must have been Jordas?"

"I am quite certain that it was not Jordas. But I will not pretend to say that it was not a squirrel. He may forego his habitudes more easily than Lancelot."

"How horribly dry you are sometimes, Philippa. There seems to be no softness in your nature. You are fit to do battle with fifty lawyers; and I pity Mr. Jellicorse, with his best clothes on."

"You could commit no greater error. We pay the price of his black silk stockings ten times over, every time we see him. The true objects of pity, are—you, I, and the estates."

"Well, let us drop it for awhile. If you begin upon that nauseous subject, not a particle of food will pass my lips; and I did look forward to a little nourishment."

"Dinner, my ladies!" cried the well-appointed Welldrum, throwing open the door as only such a man can do, while cleverly accomplishing the necessary bow, which he

clenched on such occasions with a fine smack of his lips.

"Go and tell Mr. Lancelot, if you please, that we are waiting for him." A great point was made, but not always effected, of having Master Pet in very gorgeous attire, to lead his aunt into the dining-room. It was fondly believed that this impressed him with the elegance and nice humanities required by his lofty position and high walk in life. Pet hated this performance, and generally spoiled it, by making a face over his shoulder at old Welldrum, while he strode along in real or mock awe of Aunt Philippa.

"If you please, my ladies," said the butler now, choosing Mrs. Carnaby for his eyes to rest on; "Mr. Lancelot beg to be excoosed of dinner. His head is that bad that he have gone for open air."

"Snow-headache is much in our family, Eliza, you remember how our dear father used to feel it." With these words Mistress Yordas led her sister to the dining-room, and they took good care to say nothing more about it before the officious Welldrum.

Pet meanwhile was beginning to repent of his cold and lonely venture. For a mile or two the warmth of his mind, and the glow of exercise sustained him; and he kept on admiring his own courage, till his feet began to tingle. "Insie will be bound to kiss me now; and she never will be able to laugh at me

again," he said to himself some fifty times; "I am like the great poet who describes the snow; and I have got some cherry-brandy." He trudged on very bravely; but his poor dear toes at every step grew colder. Out upon the moor, where he was now, no shelter of any kind encouraged him; no mantlet of bank, or ridge, or brushwood, set up a furry shiver betwixt him and the tatterdemallion wind. Not even a naked rock stood up, to comfort a man, by looking colder than himself.

But in truth there was no severe cold yet; no depth of snow, no intensity of frost, no splintery needles of sparkling drift; but only the beginning of the wintry time, such as makes a strong man pick his feet up, and a healthy boy start an imaginary slide. The wind, however, was shrewd and searching, and Lancelot was accustomed to a warming-pan. Inside his waistcoat he wore a hareskin, and his heart began to give rapid thumps against it. He knew that he was going into bodily peril, worse than any frost or snow.

For a long month, he had not even seen his Insie, and his hot young heart had never before been treated so contemptuously. He had been allowed to show himself in the gill at his regular interval, a fortnight ago. But no one had ventured forth to meet him, or even wave signal of welcome or farewell. But that he could endure, because he had been warned not to hope for much, that Friday;

now however, it was not his meaning to put up with any more such nonsense. That he, who had been told by the servants continually, that all the land for miles and miles around was his, should be shut out like a beggar, and compelled to play bo-peep, by people who lived in a hole in the ground, was a little more than in the whole entire course of his life he could ever have imagined. His mind was now made up to let them know who he was, and what he was, and unless they were very quick in coming to their senses, Jordas should have orders to turn them out, and take Insie altogether away from them.

But in spite of all brave thoughts and words, Master Pet began to spy about very warily, ere ever he descended from the moor into the gill. He seemed to have it borne in upon his mind that territorial rights—however large and goodly—may lead only to a taste of earth, when earth alone is witness to the treatment of her claimant. Therefore it behoved him to look sharp; and possessing the family gift of keen sight, he began to spy about, almost as shrewdly as if he had been educated in free-trade. But first he had wit enough to step below the break, and get behind a gorse-bush, lest haply he should illustrate only the passive voice of seeing.

In the deep cut of the glen there was very little snow, only a few veins and patches here

and there, threading and seaming the steep, as if a white-footed hare had been coursing about. Little stubby briar shoots, and clumps of russet bracken, and dead heather, ruffling like a brown dog's back, broke the dull surface of withered herbage, thistle-stumps, teazels, rugged banks, and naked brush. Down in the bottom the noisy brook was scurrying over its pebbles brightly, or plunging into gloom of its own production; and away at the bend of the valley was seen the cot of poor Lancelot's longing.

The situation was worth a sigh, and came half-way to share one; Pet sighed heavily, and deeply felt how wrong it was of any one to treat him so. What could be easier for him than to go—as Insie had said to him at least a score of times—and mind his own business, and shake off the dust, or the mud, of his feet at such strangers? But, alas, he had tried it, and could shake nothing, except his sad and sapient head. How deplorably was he altered from the Pet that used to be! Where were now his lofty joys, the pleasure he found in wholesome mischief and wholesale destruction, the high delight of frightening all the world about his safety?

"There are people here, I do believe," he said to himself most touchingly, "who would be quite happy to chop off my head!"

As if to give edge to so murderous a

thought, and wings to the feet of the thinker, a man both tall and broad came striding down the cottage garden. He was swinging a heavy axe as if it were a mere dress-cane, and now and then dealing clean slash of a branch, with an air which made Pet shiver worse than any wind. The poor lad saw that in the grasp of such a man he could offer less resistance than a nut within the crackers, and even his champion, the sturdy Jordas, might struggle without much avail. He gathered in his legs, and tucked his head well under the gorse to watch him.

"Surely he is too big to run very fast," thought the boy, with his valour evaporated; "it must be that horrible Maunder. What a blessing that I stopped up here just in time! He is going up the gill to cleave some wood. Shall I cut away at once, or lie flat upon my stomach? He would be sure to see me if I tried to run away; and much he would care for his landlord!"

In such a choice of evils, poor Lancelot resolved to lie still, unless the monster should turn his steps that way. And presently he had the heart-felt pleasure of seeing the formidable stranger take the track that followed the windings of the brook. But instead of going well away, and rounding the next corner, the big man stopped at the very spot where Insie used to fill her pitcher, pulled off his coat and hung it on a bush, and began with mighty

strokes to fell a dead alder-tree that stood there. As his great arms swung and his back rose and fell, and the sway of his legs seemed to shake the bank, and the ring of his axe filled the glen with echoes, wrath and terror were fighting a hot battle in the heart of Lancelot.

His sense of a landowner's rights and titles had always been most imperious, and though the Scargate estates were his, as yet, only in remainder, he was even more jealous about them than if he held them already in possession. What right had this man to cut down trees, to fell and appropriate timber? Even in the garden which he rented, he could not rightfully touch a stick or stock. But to come out here, a good furlong from his renting, and begin hacking and hewing, quite as if the land were his—it seemed almost too brazen-faced for belief! It must be stopped, at once; such outrageous trespass stopped, and punished sternly. He would stride down the hill with a summary veto—but alas, if he did, he might get cut down too!

Not only this disagreeable reflection, but also his tender regard for Insie prevented him from challenging this process of the axe; but his feelings began to goad him towards something worthy of a Yordas—for a Yordas he always accounted himself, and not by any means a Carnaby. And to this end all the powers of his home conspired.

"That fellow is terribly big and strong,"

he said to himself with much warmth of spirit; "but his axe is getting dull; and to chop down that tree of mine will take him at least half an hour. Dead wood is harder to cut than live. And when he has done that, he must work till dark, to lop the branches, and so on. I need not be afraid of anybody but this fellow. Now is my time then, while he is away. Even if the old folk are at home, they will listen to my reasons. The next time he comes to hack my tree on this side, I shall slip out, and go down to the cottage. I have no fear of any one that pays any heed to reason."

This sudden admirer and lover of reason cleverly carried out his bold discretion. For now the savage woodman, intent upon that levelling, which is the highest glory of pugnacious minds, came round the tree, glaring at it (as if it were the murderer, and he the victim), redoubling his tremendous thwacks at every sign of tremor, flinging his head back with a spiteful joy, poising his shoulders on the swing, and then with all his weight descending into the trenchant blow. When his back was fairly turned on Lancelot, and his whole mind and body thus absorbed upon his prey, the lad rose quickly from his lair, and slipped over the crest of the gill to the moorland. In a moment he was out of sight to that demon of the axe, and gliding, with his head bent low, along a little hollow

of the heathery ground, which cut off a bend of the ravine, and again struck its brink a good furlong down the gill. Here Pet stopped running, and lay down, and peered over the brink, for this part was quite new to him, and resolved, as he was to make a bold stroke of it, he naturally wished to see how the land lay, and what the fortress of the enemy was like, ere ever he ventured into it.

CHAPTER III.

BATTERY AND ASSUMPSIT.

THAT little moorland glen, whose only murmur was of wavelets, and principal traffic of birds and rabbits, even at this time of year looked pretty, with the winter light winding down its shelter and soft quietude. Ferny pitches, and grassy bends, set off the harsh outline of rock and shale, while a white mist (quivering like a clue above the rivulet) was melting into the faint blue haze diffused among the foldings and recesses of the land. On the hither side, nearly at the bottom of the slope, a bright green spot among the brown and yellow roughness, looking by comparison most smooth and rich, showed where the little cottage grew its vegetables, and even indulged in a small attempt at fruit. Behind this, the humble retirement of the cot was shielded from the wind, by a breast-work of bold rock, fringed with ground-ivy, hanging broom, and silver stars of the carline. So simple and low was the building, and so

matched with the colours around it, that but for the smoke curling up from a pipe of red pottery-ware, a stranger might almost have overlooked it. The walls were made from the rocks close by, the roof of fir-slabs thatched with ling; there was no upper storey, and (except the door and windows) all the materials seemed native and at home. Lancelot had heard, by putting a crafty question in safe places, that the people of the gill here had built their own dwelling, a good many years ago; and it looked as if they could have done it easily.

Now, if he intended to spy out the land and the house as well, before the giant of the axe returned, there was no time to lose in beginning. He had a good deal of sagacity in tricks, and some practice in little arts of robbery. For before he attained to this exalted state of mind, one of his favourite pastimes had been a course of stealthy raids upon the pears in Scargate garden. He might have had as many as he liked for asking; but what flavour would they have thus possessed? Moreover, he bore a noble spite against the gardener, whose special pride was in that pear-wall; and Pet more than once had the joy of beholding him thrash his own innocent son, for the dark disappearance of Beurré and Bergamot. Making good use of this experience, he stole his way down the steep glenside, behind the low fence of the garden, until

he reached the bottom, and the brushwood by the stream. Here he stopped to observe again, and breathe, and get his spirit up. The glassy water looked as cold as death; and if he got cramp in his feet, how could he run? And yet he could see no other way but wading, of approaching the cottage unperceived.

Now fortune (whose privilege it is to cast mortals into the holes that most misfit them) sometimes, when she has got them there, takes pity, and contemptuously lifts them. Pet was in a hole of hardship, such as his dear mamma never could have dreamed of, and such as his nurture and constitution made trebly disastrous for him. He had taken a chill from his ambush, and fright, and the cold wind over the snow of the moor; and now the long wading of that icy water might have ended upon the shores of Acheron. However, he was just about to start upon that passage—for the spirit of his race was up—when a dull grating sound, as of footsteps crunching grit, came to his prettily concave ears.

At this sound Lancelot Carnaby stopped from his rash venture into the water, and drew himself back into an ivied bush, which served as the finial of the little garden-hedge. Peeping through this, he could see that the walk from the cottage to the hedge was newly sprinkled with grey wood-ash, perhaps to

prevent the rain from lodging, and the snow from lying there. Heavy steps of two old men (as Pet in the insolence of young days called them) fell upon the dull soft crust, and ground it, heel and toe—heel first, as stiff joints have it—with the bruising snip a hungry cow makes, grazing wiry grasses. "One of them must be Insie's dad," said Pet to himself, as he crouched more closely behind the hedge; "which of them, I wonder? Well, the tall one, I suppose, to go by the height of that Maunder. And the other has only one arm; and a man with one arm could never have built their house. They are coming to sit on that bench; I shall hear every word they say, and learn some of their secrets that I never could get out of Insie one bit of. But I wonder who that other fellow is."

That other fellow, in spite of his lease, would promptly have laid his surviving hand to the ear of Master Lancelot, or any other eavesdropper; for a sturdy and resolute man was he, being no less than our ancient friend, and old soldier, Jack of the Smithies. And now was verified that homely proverb, that listeners never hear good of themselves.

"Sit down, my friend," said the elder of the twain, a man of rough dress and hard hands, but good, straightforward aspect, and that careless humour which generally comes from a life of adventures, and a long acquaintance with the world's caprice. "I have

brought you here that we may be undisturbed. Little pitchers have long ears. My daughter is as true as steel; but this matter is not for her at present. You are sure, then, that Sir Duncan is come home at last? And he wished that I should know it?"

"Yes, sir, he wished that you should know it. So soon as I told him that you was here, and leading what one may call this queer life, he slapped his thigh like this here—for he hath a downright way of everything—and he said, 'Now, Smithies, so soon as you get home, go and tell him that I am coming. I can trust him as I trust myself; and glad I am for one old friend, in the parts I am such a stranger to. Years and years I have longed to know what was become of my old friend Bart.' Tears was in his eyes, your Honour; Sir Duncan hath seen such a mighty lot of men, that his heart cometh up to the few he hath found deserving of the name, sir."

"You said that you saw him at York, I think?"

"Yes, sir, at the business-house of his agent, one Master Geoffrey Mordacks. He come there quite unexpected, I believe, to see about something else he hath in hand; and I got a message to go there at once. I save his life once in India, sir, from one of they cursed Sours, which made him take heed of me, and me of him. And then it come out where I come from, and why; and the both of us

spoke the broad Yorkshire together, like as I dea naa care to do to home. After that he got on wonderful, as you know; and I stuck to him through the whole of it, from luck as well as liking; till if I had gone out to see to his breeches, I could not very well have knowed more of him. And I tell you, sir, not to regard him for a Yordas. He hath a mind far above them lot; though I was born under them, to say so!"

"And you think that he will come and recover his rights, in spite of his father's will against him. I know nothing of the ladies of the Hall; but it seems a hard thing to turn them out, after being there so long."

"Who was turned out first, they or him? Five and twenty years of tent, open sky, jungle, and who knows what, for him—but eider-down, and fireside, and fat of land for them! No, no, sir; whatever shall happen there, will be God's own justice."

"Of His justice who shall judge?" said Insie's father quietly. "But is there not a young man grown, who passes for the heir with every one?"

"Ay, that there is; and the best game of all will be neck and crop for that young scamp. A bully, a coward, a puling milk-sop, is all the character he beareth. He giveth himself born airs, as if every inch of the Riding belonged to him. He hath all the viciousness of Yordas, without the pluck to

face it out. A little beast, that hath the venom, without the courage of a toad. Ah, how I should like to see—"

Jack of the Smithies not only saw, but felt. The Yordas blood was up in Pet. He leaped through the hedge, and struck this man, with a sharp quick fist in either eye. Smithies fell backward behind the bench, his heels danced in the air, and the stump of his arm got wedged in the stubs of a bush; while Lancelot glared at him with mad eyes.

"What next?" said his companion, rising calmly, and steadfastly gazing at Lancelot.

"The next thing is to kill him; and it shall be done," the furious youth replied, while he swung the gentleman's big stick which he had seized, and danced round his foe, with the speed of a wild cat. "Don't meddle, or it will be worse for you. You heard what he said of me. Get out of the way."

"Indeed, my young friend, I shall do nothing of the sort." But the old man was not at all sure that he could do much; such was the fury and agility of the youth, who jumped three yards for every step of his, while the poor old soldier could not move. The boy skipped round the protecting figure, whose grasp he eluded easily, and swinging the staff with both arms aimed a great blow at the head of his enemy. Suddenly the other interposed the bench, upon which the stick fell, and broke short; and before the assailant

could recover from the jerk, he was a prisoner in two powerful old arms.

"You are so wild, that we must make you fast," his captor said with a benignant smile; and struggle as he might, the boy was very soon secured. His antagonist drew forth a red bandana handkerchief, and fastened his bleeding hands behind his back. "There now, lad," he said; "you can do no mischief. Recover your temper, sir, and tell us who you are; as soon as you are sane enough to know."

Pet, having spent his just indignation, began to perceive that he had made a bad investment. His desire had been to maintain in this particular spot strict privacy, from all except Insie, to whom in the largeness of love he had declared himself. Yet here he stood, promulged, and published, strikingly and flagrantly pronounced! At first he was like to sulk, in the style of a hawk, who has failed of his swoop; but seeing his enemy arising slowly with grunts, and action nodose and angular—rather than flexibly graceful—contempt became the uppermost feature of his mind.

"My name," he said; "if you are not afraid of it, that you tie me in this cowardly, low manner, is—Lancelot Yordas Carnaby."

"My boy, it is a long name for any one to carry. No wonder that you look weak be-

neath it. And where do you live, young gentleman?"

Amazement sat upon the face of Pet, a genuine astonishment, entirely pure from wrath. It was wholly beyond his imagination, that any one, after hearing his name, should have to ask him where he lived. He thought that the question must be put in low mockery, and to answer was far beneath his dignity.

By this time the veteran Jack of the Smithies had got out of his trap, and was standing stiffly, passing his hand across his sadly smitten eyes, and talking to himself about them.

"Two black eyes at my time of life, as sure as I'm a Christian! Howsomever, young chap, I likes you better. Never dreamed there was such good stuff in you. Master Bart, cast him loose, if so please you. Let me shake hands with 'un, and bear no malice. Bad words deserve hard blows; and I ask his pardon for driving him into it. I called 'un a milksop, and he hath proved me a liar. He may be a bad 'un, but with good stuff in 'un. Lord bless me, I never would have believed the lad could hit so smartly!"

Pet was well pleased with this tribute to his prowess; but as for shaking hands with a tenant, and a "common man"—as every one not of gentle birth was then called—such an act was quite below him, or above

him—according as we take his own opinion, or the truth. And possibly he rose in Smithies' mind, by drawing back from bodily overture.

Mr. Bart looked on, with all the bliss of an ancient interpreter. He could follow out the level of the vein of each, as no one may do, except a gentleman perhaps, who has turned himself deliberately into a "common man." Bart had done his utmost towards this end; but the process is difficult, when voluntary.

"I think it is time," he now said firmly to the unshackled and triumphant Pet; "for Lancelot Yordas Carnaby to explain what has brought him into such humble quarters, and induced him to turn eavesdropper; which was not considered (at least in my young days) altogether the part of a gentleman."

The youth had not seen quite enough of the world to be pat with a fertile lie as yet; especially under such searching eyes. However he did as much as could be well expected.

"I was just looking over my property," he said; "and I thought I heard somebody cutting down my timber. I came to see who it was, and I heard people talking, and before I could ask them about it, I heard myself abused disgracefully; and that was more than I could stand."

"We must take it for granted that a brave

young gentleman of your position would tell no falsehood. You assure us, on your honour, that you heard no more."

"Well, I heard voices, sir. But nothing to understand, or make head or tail of." There was some truth in this; for young Lancelot had not the least idea who "Sir Duncan" was. His mother and aunt had kept him wholly in the dark as to any lost uncle in India. "I should like to know what it was," he added; "if it has anything to do with me."

This was a very clever hit of his; and it made the old gentleman believe him altogether.

"All in good time, my young friend," he answered, even with a smile of some pity for the youth. "But you are scarcely old enough for business questions, although so keen about your timber. Now after abusing you so disgracefully, as I admit that my friend here has done, and after roping your pugnacious hands, as I myself was obliged to do, we never can launch you upon the moor, in such weather as this, without some food. You are not very strong, and you have overdone yourself. Let us go to the house, and have something."

Jack of the Smithies showed alacrity at this, as nearly all old soldiers must; but Pet was much oppressed with care, and the intellect in his breast diverged into sore distrac-

tion of anxious thought. Whether should he draw the keen sword of assurance, put aside the others, and see Insie, or whether should he start with best foot foremost, scurry up the hill, and avoid the axe of Maunder. Pallas counselled this course, and Aphrodite that; and the latter prevailed; as she always used to do, until she produced the present dry-cut generation.

Lancelot bowed to the gentleman of the gill, and followed him along the track of grit, which set his little pearly teeth on edge; while Jack of the Smithies led, and formed, the rear-guard. "This is coming now to something very queer," thought Pet; "after all it might have been better for me to take my chance with the hatchet-man."

Brown dusk was ripely settling down among the mossy apple-trees, and the leafless alders of the brook, and the russet and yellow memories of late autumn lingering in the glen, while the peaky little freaks of snow, and the cold sighs of the wind, suggested fireside and comfort. Mr. Bart threw open his cottage door; and bowing as to a welcome guest, invited Pet to enter. No passage, no cold entrance-hall, demanded scrapes of ceremony; but here was the parlour, and the feeding-place, and the warm dance of the fire-glow. Logs that meant to have a merry time, and spread a cheerful noise abroad, ere ever they turned to embers, were

snorting forth the pointed flames, and spitting soft protests of sap. And before them stood, with eyes more bright than any flash of firelight, intent upon rich simmering scents, a lovely form, a grace of dainties—oh, a goddess certainly!

"Master Carnaby," said the host, "allow me, sir, the honour to present my daughter to you. Insie darling, this is Mr. Lancelot Yordas Carnaby. Make him a pretty curtsey."

Insie turned round with a rosy blush, brighter than the brightest firewood, and tried to look at Pet as if she had never even dreamed of such a being. Pet drew hard upon his heart, and stood bewildered, tranced, and dazzled. He had never seen Insie indoors before, which makes a great difference in a girl; and the vision was too bright for him.

For here, at her own hearth, she looked so gentle, sweet, and lovely. No longer wild and shy, or gaily mischievous and watchful, but calm-eyed, firm-lipped, gravely courteous; intent upon her father's face, and banishing not into shadow so much as absolute nullity any one who dreamed that he ever filled a pitcher for her, or fed her with grouse and partridge, and committed the incredible atrocity of kissing her.

Lancelot ceased to believe it possible that he ever could have done such a thing as that, while he saw how she never would see him at

all, or talk in the voice that he had been accustomed to, or even toss her head, in the style he had admired, when she tried to pretend to make light of him. If she would only make light of him now, he would be well contented; and say to himself that she did it on purpose, for fear of the opposite extreme. But the worst of it was, that she had quite forgotten, beyond blink of inquiry, or gleam of hope, that ever in her life she had set eyes on a youth of such perfect insignificance before.

"My friend, you ought to be hungry," said Bart of the Gill—as he was proud to call himself—"after your exploit you should be fed. Your vanquished foe will sit next to you. Insie, you are harassed in mind by the countenance of our old friend, Master John Smithies. He has met with a little mishap—never mind—the rising generation is quick of temper. A soldier respects his victor; it is a beautiful arrangement of Providence; otherwise wars would never cease. Now give our two guests a good dish of the best, piping hot, and of good meaty fibre. We will have our own supper by-and-by, when Maunder comes home, and your mother is ready. Gentlemen, fall to; you have far to go, and the moors are bad after nightfall."

Lancelot, proudly as he stood upon his rank, saw fit to make no objection. Not only did his inner man cry, "Feed, even though a common man feed with thee," but

his mind was under the influence of a stronger one, which scorned such stuff. Moreover, Insie, for the first time, gave him a glance demure, but imperative, which meant—"Obey my father, sir."

He obeyed, and was rewarded; for the beautiful girl came round him so, to hand whatever he wanted, and seemed to feel so sweetly for him in his strange position, that he scarcely knew what he was eating, only that it savoured of rich rare love, and came from the loveliest creature in the world. In stern fact, it came from the head of a sheep; but neither jaws nor teeth were seen. Upon one occasion, he was almost sure that a curl of Insie's lovely hair fell upon the back of his stooping neck; he could scarcely keep himself from jumping up; and he whispered very softly when the old man was away, "Oh, if you would only do that again!" But his darling made manifest that this was a mistake, and applied herself sedulously to the one-armed Jack.

Jack of the Smithies was a trencher-man of the very first order, and being well wedded (with a promise already of young soldiers to come) it behoved him to fill all his holes away from home, and spare his own cupboard for the sake of Mistress Smithies. He perceived the duty, and performed it, according to the discipline of the British army.

But Insie was fretting in the conscience of

her heart, to get the young Lancelot fed and dismissed, before the return of her great wild brother. Not that he would hurt their guest, though unwelcome; or even show any sort of rudeness to him; but more than ever now, since she heard of Pet's furious onslaught upon the old soldier—which made her begin to respect him a little—she longed to prevent any meeting between this gallant and the rough Maunder. And that anxiety led her to look at Pet with a melancholy kindness. Then Jack of the Smithies cut things short.

"Off's the word," he said; "if ever I expects to see home afore daylight. All of these moors is known to me, and many's the time I have tracked them all in sleep, when the round world was betwixt us. But without any moon it is hard to do 'em waking; and the loss of my arm sends me crooked in the dark. And as for young folk, they be all abroad to once. With your leave, Master Bart, I'll be off immediate, after getting all I wants, as the manner of the world is. My good missus will be wondering what is come of me."

"You have spoken well," his host replied; "and I think we shall have a heavy fall to-night. But this young gentleman must not go home alone. He is not robust, and the way is long and rough. I have seen him shivering several times. I will fetch my staff, and march with him."

"No sir, I will not have such a thing done," the veteran answered sturdily. "If the young gentleman is a gentleman, he will not be afraid for me to take him home, in spite of what he hath done to me. Speak up, young man, are you frightened of me?"

"Not if you are not afraid of me," said Pet, who had now forgotten all about that Maunder, and only longed to stay where he was, and set up a delicious little series of glances. For the room, and the light, and the tenour of the place began more and more to suit such uses. And most, and best of all, his Insie was very thankful to him for his good behaviour; and he scarcely could believe that she wanted him to go. To go, however, was his destiny; and when he had made a highly laudable, and far-away salute, it happened—in the shift of people, and of light, and clothing, which goes on so much in the winter-time,—that a little hand came into his, and rose to his lips, with ground of action, not for assault and battery, but simply for *assumpsit*.

CHAPTER IV.

STORMY GAP.

SNOWY weather now set in, and people were content to stay at home. Among the scaurs and fells and moors, the most perturbed spirit was compelled to rest or try to do so, or at any rate not agitate its body out of doors. Lazy folk were suited well with reason good for laziness; and gentle minds, that dreaded evil, gladly found its communication stopped.

Combined excitement, and exertion, strong amazement, ardent love, and a cold of equal severity, laid poor Pet Carnaby by the heels, and reduced him to perpetual gruel. He was shut off from external commune, and strictly blockaded in his bedroom, where his only attendants were his sweet mother, and an excellent nurse who stroked his forehead, and called him "dear pet," till he hated her, and worst of all, that Dr. Spraggs, who lived in the house, because the weather was so bad.

"We have taken a chill, and our mind is a little unhinged," said the skilful prac-

titioner; "careful diet, complete repose, a warm surrounding atmosphere, absence of undue excitement, and above all a course of my gentle alteratives regularly administered —these are the very simple means to restore our beloved patient. He is certainly making progress; but I assure you, my dear madam, or rather I need not tell a lady of such wonderfully clear perception, that remedial measures must be slow, to be truly efficacious. With lower organizations we may deal in a more empiric style; but no experiments must be tried here—"

"Dr. Spraggs, I should hope not indeed. You alarm me by the mere suggestion."

"Gradation, delicately pursued, adapted subtly, discriminated nicely by the unerring diagnosis of extensive medical experience, combined with deep study of the human system, and a highly distinguished university career, such, madam, are in my humble opinion, the true elements of permanent amelioration. At the same time we must not conceal from ourselves that our constitution is by no means one of ordinary organization. None of your hedger and ditcher class, but delicate, fragile, impulsive, sensitive, liable to inopine derangements from excessive activity of mind—"

"Oh, Dr. Spraggs, he has been reading poetry, which none of our family ever even dreamed of doing—it is a young man, over

your way somewhere. Possibly you may have heard of him."

"That young man has a great deal to answer for. I have traced a very bad case of whooping-cough to him. That explains many symptoms which I could not quite make out. We will take away this book, madam, and give him Dr. Watts—the only wholesome poet that our country has produced; though even his opinions would be better expressed in prose."

But the lad, in spite of all this treatment, slowly did recover, and then obtained relief, which set him on his nimble legs again. For his Aunt Philippa, one snowy morning, went into the room beneath that desperately sick chamber, to see whether wreaths of snow had entered, as they often did, between the loose joints of the casement. She walked very carefully, for fear of making a noise that might be heard above, and disturb the repose of the poor invalid. But, to her surprise, there came loud thumps from above, and a quivering of the ceiling, and a sound as of rushing steps, and laughter, and uproarious jollity.

"What can it be? I am perfectly amazed," said Mistress Yordas to herself; "I must inquire into this."

She knew that her sister was out of the way, and the nurse in the kitchen, having one of her frequent feeds and agreeable dis-

courses. So she went to a mighty ring in her own room, as large as an untaxed carriage-wheel, and from it (after due difficulty) took the spare key of the passage-door that led the way to Lancelot.

No sooner had she passed this door, than she heard a noise a great deal worse than the worst imagination, whizz, and hiss, and crack, and smash, and rolling of hollow things over hollow places, varied with shouts, and the flapping of skirts, and jingling of money upon heart of oak; these and many other travails of the air (including strong language) amazed the lady. Hastening into the sick-room she found the window wide open, with the snow pouring in, a dozen of phial-bottles ranged like skittles, some full and some empty, and Lancelot dancing about in his night-gown, with "Divine songs" poised for another hurl.

"Two for a full, and one for an empty. Seven to me, and four to you. No cheating now, or I'll knock you over," he was shouting to Welldrum's boy, who had clearly been smuggled in at the window for this game. "There's plenty more in old Spragg's chest. Holloa, here's Aunt Philippa!"

Mistress Yordas was not displeased with this spirited application of pharmacy; she at once flung wide the passage-door, and Pet was free of the house again, but upon parole not to venture out of doors. The first use

he made of his liberty was to seek the faithful Jordas, who possessed a little private sitting-room, and there hold secret council with him.

The dogman threw his curly head back, when he had listened to his young lord's tale, (which contained the truth, and nothing but the truth, yet not by any means the whole truth; for the leading figure was left out) and a snort from his broad nostrils showed contempt and strong vexation.

"Just what I said would come o' such a job," he muttered without thought of Lancelot; "to let in a traitor, and spake him fair, and make much of him. I wish you had knocked his two eyes out, Master Lance, instead of only blacking of 'un. And a fortnight lost through that pisonin' Spraggs! And the weather going on, snow and thaw, snow and thaw. There's scarcely a dog can stand, let alone a horse, and the wreaths getting deeper. Most onlucky! It hath come to pass most ontoimely."

"But who is Sir Duncan? And who is Mr. Bart? I have told you everything, Jordas; and all you do is to tell me nothing."

"What more can I tell you, sir? You seem to know most about 'em. And what was it as took you down that way, sir, if I may make so bold to ask?"

"Jordas, that is no concern of yours; every

gentleman has his own private affairs, which cannot in any way concern a common man. But I wish you particularly to find out all that can be known about Mr. Bart—what made him come here, and why does he live so, and how much has he got a year? He seems to be quite a gentleman —"

"Then his private affairs, sir, cannot concern a common man. You had better ways go yourself, and ask him; or ask his friend with the two black eyes. Now just you do as I bid you, Master Lance. Not a word of all this here to my ladies; but think of something as you must have immediate from Middleton. Something as your health requires"—here Jordas indulged in a sarcastic grin—"something as must come, if the sky come down, or the day of Judgment was to-morrow."

"I know, yes, I am quite up to you, Jordas. Let me see, last time it was a sweetbread. That would never do again. It shall be a hundred oysters; and Spraggs shall command it, or be turned out."

"Jordas, I really cannot bear," said the kind Mrs. Carnaby, an hour afterwards, "that you should seem almost to risk your life, by riding to Middleton in such dreadful weather. Are you sure that it will not snow again, and quite sure that you can get through all the wreaths? If not, I would on no account have you go. Perhaps after all it

is but the fancy of a poor fantastic invalid; though Dr. Spraggs feels that it is so important, and may be the turning-point in his sad illness. It seems such a long way in such weather; and selfish people, who can never understand, might say that it was quite unkind of us. But if you have made up your mind to go, in spite of all remonstrance, you must be sure to come back to-night, and do, please, to see that the oysters are round, and have not got any of their lids up."

The dogman knew well that he jeopardized his life in either half of the journey; no little in going, and tenfold as much in returning through the snows of night. Though the journey in the first place had been of his own seeking, and his faithful mind was set upon it, some little sense of bitterness was in his heart, that his life was not thought more of. He made a low bow, and turned away, that he might not meet those eyes so full of anxiety for another, and of none for him. And when he came to think of it, he was sorry afterwards for indulging in a little bit of two-edged satire.

"Will you please to ask my lady, if I may take Marmaduke. Or whether she would be afeared to risk him in such weather?"

"I think it is unkind of you to speak like that. I need not ask my sister, as you ought to know. Of course you may take Marmaduke. I need not tell you to be careful of him."

After that, if he had chosen for himself, he would not have taken Marmaduke. But he thought of the importance of his real purpose, and could trust no other horse to get him through it.

In fine summer weather, when the sloughs were in, and the watercourses low or dry, and the roads firm, wherever there were any, a good horse and rider, well acquainted with the track, might go from Scargate Hall to Middleton in about three hours; nearly all of the journey being well down hill. But the travel to come back was a very different thing; four hours and a half was quick time for it, even in the best state of earth and sky, and the Royal Mail pony was allowed a good seven, because his speed (when first established) had now impaired his breathing. And ever since the snow set in, he had received his money for the journey, but preferred to stay in stable; for which everybody had praised him, finding letters give them indigestion.

Now Jordas roughed Marmaduke's shoes himself; for the snow would be frozen in the colder places, and ball wherever any softness was—two things which demand very different measures. Also he fed him well, and nourished himself, and took nurture for the road; so that with all haste he could not manage to start before twelve of the day. Travelling was worse than he expected, and the snow

very deep in places, especially at Stormy Gap, about a league and a half from Scargate. Moreover he knew that the strength of his horse must be carefully husbanded for the return; and so it was dusk of the winter evening, and the shops of the little town were being lit with hoops of candles, when Jordas, followed by Saracen, came trotting through the unpretending street.

That ancient dog Saracen, the largest of the bloodhounds, had joined the expedition as a volunteer, craftily following and crouching out of sight, until he was certain of being too far from home to be sent back again. Then he boldly appeared, and cantered gaily on in front of Marmaduke, with his heavy dewlaps laced with snow.

Jordas put up at a quiet old inn, and had Saracen chained strongly to a ring-bolt in the stable; then he set off afoot to see Mr. Jellicorse, and just as he rang the office-bell, a little fleecy twinkle fell upon one of his eyelashes, and looking sharply up he saw that a snowy night was coming.

The worthy lawyer received him kindly, but not at all as if he wished to see him; for Christmas-tide was very nigh at hand, and the weather made the ink go thick, and only a clerk who was working for promotion would let his hat stay on its peg, after the drum and fife went by, as they always did at dusk of night, to frighten Bonyparty.

"There are only two important facts in all you have told me, Jordas," Mr. Jellicorse said when he had heard him out; "one that Sir Duncan is come home, of which I was aware some time ago; and the other that he has been consulting an agent of the name of Mordacks living in this county. That certainly looks as if he meant to take some steps against us. But what can he do more than might have been done five-and-twenty years ago?" The lawyer took good care to speak to none but his principals concerning that plaguesome deed of appointment.

"Well, sir, you know best, no doubt. Only that he hath the money now, by all accounts; and like enough he hath laboured for it, a' purpose to fight my ladies. If your Honour knew as well as I do, what a Yordas is for fighting, and for downright stubbornness—"

"Perhaps I do," replied the lawyer with a smile; "but if he has no children of his own, as I believe is the case with him, it seems unlikely that he would risk his substance in a rash attempt to turn out those who are his heirs."

"He is not so old but what he might have children yet; if he hath none now to hand. Any ways it was my duty to tell you my news immediate."

"Jordas, I always say that you are a model of a true retainer—a character becom-

ing almost extinct, in this faithless and revolutionary age. Very few men would have ridden into town, through all those dangerous unmade roads, in weather when even the Royal Mail is kept, by the will of the Lord, in stable."

"Well, sir," said Jordas, with his brave soft smile; "the smooth and the rough of it comes in and out, accordin'. Some days I does next to nought; and some days I earns my keepin'. Any more commands for me, Lawyer Jellicoose? Time cometh on rather late for starting."

"Jordas, you amaze me. You never mean to say, that you dream of setting forth again on such a night as this is? I will find you a bed; you shall have a hot supper. What would your ladies think of me, if I let you go forth among the snow again? Just look at the window-panes, while you and I were talking! And the feathers of the ice shooting up inside, as long as the last sheaf of quills I opened for them. Quills, quills, quills all day! And when I buy a goose unplucked, if his quills are any good, his legs won't carve, and his gizzard is full of gravel-stones! Ah, the world grows everyday in roguery."

"All the world agrees to that, sir; ever since I were as high as your table, never I hear two opinions about it; and it maketh a man seem to condemn himself. Good night, sir, and I hope we shall have good news, so

soon as his Royal Majesty the king affordeth a pony as can lift his legs."

Mr. Jellicorse vainly strove to keep the man in town that night. He even called for his sensible wife, and his excellent cook to argue, having no clerk left to make scandal of the scene. The cook had a turn of mind for Jordas, and did think that he would stop for her sake; and she took a broom to show him what the depth of snow was upon the red tiles between the brew-house and the kitchen. An icicle hung from the lip of the pump, and new snow sparkled on the cook's white cap, and the dark curly hair which she managed to let fall; the brew-house smelled nice, and the kitchen still nicer; but it made no difference to Jordas. If he had told them the reason of this hurry, they would have said hard things about it perhaps; Mrs. Jellicorse especially, (being well read in the Scriptures, and fond of quoting them against all people who had grouse, and sent her none,) would have called to mind what David said, when the three mighty men broke through the host, and brought water from the well of Bethlehem. So Jordas only answered that he had promised to return, and a trifle of snow improved the travelling.

"A wilful man must have his way," said Mr. Jellicorse at last; "we cannot put him in the pound, Diana; but the least we can do is

to provide him for a coarse, cold journey. If I know anything of our country, he will never see Scargate Hall to-night, but his blanket will be a snow-drift. Give him one of our new whitneys to go behind his saddle, and I will make him take two things. I am your legal adviser, Jordas, and you are like all other clients. Upon the main issue, you cast me off; but in small matters you must obey me."

The hardy dogman was touched with this unusual care for his welfare. At home his services were accepted as a due, requiring little praise and less of gratitude. It was his place to do this and that, and be thankful for the privilege. But his comfort was left for himself to study; and if he had studied it much, reproach would soon have been the chief reward. It never would do, as his ladies said, to make too much of Jordas. He would give himself airs, and think that people could not get on without him.

Marmaduke looked fresh and bold when he came out of stable; he had eaten with pleasure a good hot dinner, or supper perhaps he considered it, liking to have his meals early, as horses generally do. And he neighed and capered for the homeward road, though he knew how full it was of hardships; for never yet looked horse through bridle, without at least one eye resilient towards the charm of headstall. And now he had both eyes fixed with legitimate aim in that direc-

tion; and what were a few tiny atoms of snow to keep a big horse from his household?

Merrily therefore he set forth, with a sturdy rider on his back; his clear neigh rang through the thick dull streets, and kind people came to their white blurred windows, and exclaimed as they glanced at the parti-coloured horseman rushing away into the dreary depths—"Well, rather him than me, thank God!"

"You keep the dog," Master Jordas had said to the hostler, before he left the yard; "he is like a lamb, when you come to know him. I can't be plagued with him to-night. Here's a half-crown for his victuals; he eats precious little for the size of him. A bullock's liver every other day, and half a stone of offal between times. Don't be afeared of him. He looks like that, to love you, man."

Instead of keeping on the Durham side of Tees, as he would have done in fair weather for the first four miles or so, Jordas crossed by the old town bridge, into his native county. The journey would be longer thus, but easier in some places, and the track more plain to follow, which on a snowy night was everything. For all things now were in one indiscriminate pelt and whirl of white; the Tees was striped with rustling floes among the black moor-water; and the trees, as long as there were any, bent their shrouded forms and moaned.

But with laborious plunges, and broad

scatterings of obstruction, the willing horse ploughed out his way, himself the while wrapped up in white, and caked in all his tufty places with a crust that flopped up and down. The rider, himself piled up with snow, and bearded with a berg of it, from time to time, with his numb right-hand, fumbled at the frozen clouts, that clogged the poor horse's mane and crest.

"How much longer will a' go I wonder?" said Jordas to himself for the twentieth time; "The Lord in heaven knows where we be; but horse knows better than the Lord a'most. Two hour it must be since ever I 'tempted to make head or tail of it. But Marmaduke knoweth when a' hath his head; these creatures is wiser than Christians. Save me from the witches, if I ever see such weather! And I wish that Master Lance's oysters wasn't quite so much like him."

For broad as his back was, perpetual thump of rugged and flintified knobs and edges, through the flag-basket strapped over his neck, was beginning to tell upon his staunch but jolted spine; while his foot in the northern stirrup was numbed, and threatening to get frost-bitten.

"The Lord knoweth where we be," he said once more, growing in piety as the peril grew. "What can old horse know, without the Lord hath told 'un? And likely he hath never asked, no more than I did. We mought a'

come twelve moiles, or we mought a' come no more than six. Whatever is there left in the world to judge by? The hills, or the hollows, or the boskies, all is one, so far as the power of a man's eyes goes. Howsomever, drive on, old Dukie."

Old Dukie drove on with all his might and main, and the stout spirit which engenders strength, till he came to a white wall reared before him, twice as high as his snow-capped head, and swirling like a billow of the sea with drift. Here he stopped short, for he had his own rein, and turned his clouted neck, and asked his master what to make of it.

"We must a' come at last to Stormy Gap; it might be worse, and it might be better. Rocks o' both sides, and no way round. No choice but to get through it, or to spend the night inside of it. You and I are a pretty good weight, old Dukie. We'll even try a charge for it, afore we knock under. We can't have much more smother than we've gotten already. My father was taken like this, I've heard tell, in the service of old Squire Philip; and he put his nag at it, and scumbled through. But first you get up your wind, old chap."

Marmaduke seemed to know what was expected of him; for he turned round, retreated a few steps, and then stood panting. Then Jordas dismounted, as well as he could with his windward leg nearly frozen. He smote him-

self lustily, with both arms swinging upon his broad breast,. and he stamped in the snow, till he felt his tingling feet again. Then he took up the skirt of his thick heavy coat, and wiped down the head, mane, and shoulders of the horse, and the great pile of snow upon the crupper. "Start clear, is a good word," he said.

For a moment he stopped to consider the forlorn hope of his last resolution. "About me, there is no such great matter," he thought; "but if I was to kill Dukie, who would ever hear the last of it? And what a good horse he have been, to be sure! But if I was to leave him so, the crows would only have him. We be both in one boat; we must try of it." He said a little prayer, which was all he knew, for himself and a lass he had a liking to, who lived in a mill upon the river Lune; and then he got into the saddle again, and set his teeth hard, and spoke to Marmaduke, a horse who would never be touched with a spur. "Come on, old chap," was all he said.

The horse looked about in the thick of the night; as the head of the horse peers out of the cloak, in Welsh mummery at Christmastide. The thick of the night was light and dark, with the dense intensity of downpour; light in itself, and dark with shutting out all sight of everything—a close-at-hand confusion, and a distance out of measure. The

horse, with his wise snow-crusted eyes, took in all the winnowing of light among the draff, and saw no possibility of breaking through, but resolved to spend his life as he was ordered. No power of rush, or of dash, could he gather, because of the sinking of his feet; the main chance was of bulk and weight; and his rider left him free to choose. For a few steps he walked, nimbly picking up his feet, and then with a canter of the best spring he could compass, hurled himself into the depth of the drift, while Jordas lay flat along his neck, and let him plunge. For a few yards, the light snow flew before him, like froth of the sea before a broad-bowed ship, and smothered as he was, he fought onward for his life. But very soon the power of his charge was gone, his limbs could not rise, and his breath was taken from him, the hole that he had made was filled up behind him, fresh volumes from the shaken height came pouring down upon him, his flanks and his back were wedged fast in the cumber, and he stood still and trembled, being buried alive.

Jordas, with a great effort, threw himself off, and put his hat before his mouth, to make himself a breathing-space. He scarcely knew whether he stood or lay; but he kicked about for want of air, and the more he kicked the worse it was; as in the depth of nightmare. Blindness, choking, smothering, and freezing

fell in a lump upon his poor body now, and the shrieking of the horse, and the panting of his struggles came, by some vibration, to him.

But just as he began to lose his wits, sink away backward, and gasp for breath, a gleam of light broke upon his closing eyes; he gathered the remnant of his strength, struck for it, and was in a space of free air. After several long pants he looked around, and found that a thicket of stub oak jutting from the crag of the gap, had made a small alcove with billows of snow piled over it. Then the brave spirit of the man came forth. "There is room for Dukie as well as me," he gasped; "with God's help, I will fetch him in."

Weary as he was, he cast himself back into the wall of snow, and listened. At first he heard nothing; and made sure that all was over; but presently a faint soft gurgle, like a dying sob, came through the murk. With all his might he dashed towards the sound, and laid hold of a hairy chin just foundering. "Rise up, old chap," he tried to shout, and he gave the horse a breath or two, with the broad-brimmed hat above his nose. Then Marmaduke rallied for one last fight, with the surety of a man to help him. He staggered forward to the leading of the hand he knew so well, and fell down upon his knees; but his head was clear, and he drew long breaths, and his heart was glad, and his eyes looked up, and he gave a feeble whinny.

CHAPTER V.

BAT OF THE GILL.

Upon that same evening, the cottage in the gill was well snowed up, as befell it every winter, more or less handsomely, according to the wind. The wind was in the right way to do it truly now, with just enough draught to pile bountiful wreaths, and not enough of wild blast to scatter them again. "Bat of the gill," as Mr. Bart was called, sat by the fire, with his wife and daughter, and listened very calmly to the whistle of the wind, and the sliding of the soft fall that blocked his window-panes.

Insie was reading, Mrs. Bart was knitting stockings, and Mr. Bart was thinking of his own strange life. It never once occurred to him, that great part of its strangeness sprang from the oddities of his own nature, any more than a man who has been in a quarrel believes that he could have kept out of it. "Matters beyond my own control have forced me to do this and that," is the sure belief of

every man, whose life has run counter to his fellows, through his own inborn diversity. In this man's nature were two strange points, sure (if they are strong enough to survive experience) to drive anybody into strange ways—he did not care for money, and he contemned rank.

How these two horrible twists got into his early composition, is more than can be told, and in truth it does not matter. But being quite incurable, and meeting with no sympathy, except among people who aspired to them only, and failed—if they ever got the chance of failing—these depravations from the standard of mankind drove Christopher Bart from the beaten tracks of life. Providence offered him several occasions of return into the ordinary course, for after he had cast abroad a very nice inheritance, other two fortunes fell to him, but found him as difficult as ever to stay with. Not that he was lavish upon luxury of his own, for no man could have simpler tastes; but that he weakly believed in the duty of benevolence, and the charms of gratitude. Of the latter it were a truism to say that he got none; while with the former he produced some harm. When all his bread had been cast upon the waters, he set out to earn his own crust, as best he might.

Hence came a chapter of accidents, and a volume of motley incidents in various climes, and upon far seas. Being a very strong,

active man, with gift of versatile hand and brain, and early acquaintance with handicrafts, Christopher Bart could earn his keep, and make in a year almost as much as he used to give away, or lend without redemption, in a general day of his wealthy time. Hard labour tried to make him sour, but did not succeed therein.

Yet one thing in all this experience vexed him more than any hardship, to wit, that he never could win true fellowship among his new fellows in the guild of labour. Some were rather surly, others very pleasant (from a warm belief that he must yet come into money) but whatsomever or whosoever they were, or of whatever land, they all agreed that Christopher Bart was not of their communion. Manners, appearance, education, freedom from prejudice, and other wide diversities, marked him as an interloper, and perhaps a spy, among the enlightened working men of the period. Over and over again he strove to break down this barrier; but thrice as hard he might have striven, and found it still too strong for him. This and another circumstance at last impressed him with the superior value of his own society. Much as he loved the working man—in spite of all experience of him—that worthy fellow would not have it, but felt a truly and piously hereditary scorn, for "a gentleman as took a order, when but for being a blessed

fool, he might have stood there giving it."

The other thing that helped to drive him from this very dense array, was his own romantic marriage, and the copious birth of children. After the sensitive age was past, and when the sensibles ought to reign, for then he was past five-and-thirty, he fell (for the first time of his life) into a violent passion of love for a beautiful Jewish maid barely turned seventeen; Zilpah admired him, for he was of noble aspect, rich with variety of thoughts and deeds. With women he had that peculiar power, which men of strong character possess; his voice was like music, and his words as good as poetry, and he scarcely ever seemed to contradict himself. Very soon Zilpah adored him; and then he gave notice to her parents that she was to be his wife. These stared considerably, being very wealthy people, of high Jewish blood, (and thus the oldest of the old) and steadfast most—where all are steadfast—to their own race and religion. Finding their astonishment received serenely, they locked up their daughter, with some strong expressions; which they redoubled when they found the door wide open in the morning. Zilpah was gone, and they scratched out her name from the surface of their memories.

Christopher Bart, being lawfully married—for the local restrictions scorned the case of

a foreigner and a Jewess—crossed the Polish frontier with his mules and tools, and drove his little covered cart through Austria. And here he lit upon, and helped in some predicament of the road, a spirited young Englishman undergoing the miseries of the grand tour, the son and heir of Philip Yordas. Duncan was large and crooked of thought—as every true Yordas must be—and finding a mind in advance of his own by several years of such sallyings, and not yet even swerving towards the turning goal of corpulence, the young man perceived that he had hit upon a prophet.

For Bart scarcely ever talked at all of his generous ideas. A prophet's proper mantle is the long cloak of Harpocrates, and the best of his vaticinations are invented from the event for him. So it came about that Duncan Yordas, difficult as he was to lead, largely shared the devious courses of Christopher Bart the workman, and these few months of friendship made a lasting mark upon the younger man.

Soon after this a heavy blow befell the ingenious wanderer. Among his many arts and trades, he had some knowledge of engineering, or at any rate much boldness of it; which led him to conceive a brave idea concerning some tributary of the Po. The idea was sound and fine, and might have led to many blessings; but nature, enjoying her

bad work best, recoiled upon her improver. He left an oozy channel drying, (like a glanderous sponge) in August; and virulent fever came into his tent. All of his eight children died except his youngest son Maunder; his own strong frame was shaken sadly; and his loving wife lost all her strength and buxom beauty. He gathered the remnants of his race, and stricken but still unconquered, took his way to a long-forgotten land. "The residue of us must go home," he said, after all his wanderings.

In London, of course, he was utterly forgotten, although he had spent much substance there, in the days of sanguine charity. Durham was his native county, where he might have been a leading man, if more like other men. "Cosmopolitan," as he was, and strong in his own opinions still, the force of years, and sorrow, and long striving told upon him. He had nursed a yearning desire to mend the kettles of the mansion that once was his; but when he came to the brink of Tees, his stout heart failed, and he could not cross.

Instead of that he turned away, to look for his old friend Yordas; not to be patronized by him, for patronage he would have none; but from hankering after a congenial mind, and to touch upon kind memories. Yordas was gone, as pure an outcast as himself, and his name almost forbidden there. He thought it a part of the general wrong, and wandered

about to see the land, with his eyes wide open, as usual.

There was nothing very beautiful in the land, and nothing at all attractive, except that it commanded length of view, and was noble in its rugged strength. This, however, pleased him well, and here he resolved to set up his staff, if means could be found to make it grow. From the higher fells he could behold —whenever the weather encouraged him— the dromedary humps of certain hills, at the tail whereof he had been at school—a charming mist of retrospect. And he felt, though it might have been hard to make him own it, a deeply-seated joy that here he should be long lengths out of reach of the most highly illuminated working-man. This was an inconsistent thing; but consistent for ever in coming to pass.

Where the will is, there the way is, if the will be only wise. Bart found out a way of living in this howling wilderness, as his poor wife would have called it, if she had been a bad wife. Unskilful as he had shown himself in the matter of silver and gold, he had won great skill in the useful metals, especially in steel—the type of truth. And here in a break of rock he discovered a slender vein of a slate-grey mineral, distinct from cobalt, but not unlike it, such as he had found in the Pyrenees, and which in metallurgy had no name yet, for its value was known to very

few. But a legend of the Pyrenees declared that the ancient cutlers of Bilboa owed much of their fame to the use of this mineral in the careful process of conversion.

"I can make a living out of it, and that is all I want," said Bart, who was moderately sanguine still. "I know a large cutler, who has faith in me, and is doing all he can against the supremacy of Sheffield. If I can make arrangements with him, we will settle here, and keep to our own affairs for the future."

He built him a cottage in lonely snugness, far in the waste, and outside even of the range of title-deeds, though he paid a small rent to the manor, to save trouble, and to satisfy his conscience of the mineral deposit. By right of discovery, lease, and user, this became entirely his, as nobody else had ever heard of it. So by the fine irony of facts it came to pass—first that the squanderer of three fortunes united his lot with a Jewess; next that a great "cosmopolitan" hugged a strict corner of jealous monopoly; and again that a champion of communism insisted upon his exclusive right to other people's property. However, for all that, it might not be easy to find a more consistent man.

Here Maunder, the surviving son grew up, and Insie, their last child, was born; and the land enjoyed peace for twenty years, because it was of little value. A man who had been

about the world so loosely must have found it hard to be boxed up here, except for the lowering of strength and pride, by sorrow of affection, and sore bodily affliction. But the air of the moorland is good for such troubles; Bart possessed a happy nature; and perhaps it was well that his children could say, "We are nine; but only two to feed."

It must have been the whistling wind, a long memorial sound, which sent him, upon this snowy December night, back among the echoes of the past; for he always had plenty of work to do, even in the winter evenings, and was not at all given to folded arms. And before he was tired of his short warm rest, his wife asked, "Where is Maunder?"

"I left him doing his work," he replied; "he had a great heap still to clear. He understands his work right well. He will not go to bed till he has done it. We must not be quite snowed up, my dear."

Mrs. Bart shook her head and sighed; having lost so many children, she was anxious about the rest of them. But before she could speak again, a heavy leap against the door was heard; the strong latch rattled, and the timbers creaked. Insie jumped up, to see what it meant; but her father stopped her, and went himself. When he opened the door, a whirl of snow flew in, and through the glitter and the flutter a great dog came reeling, and rolled upon the floor, a mighty lump of

bristled whiteness. Mrs. Bart was terrified, for she thought it was a wolf, not having found it in her power to believe that there could be such a desert place without wolves in the winter-time.

"Why, Saracen!" said Insie; "I declare it is! You poor old dog, what can have brought you out, this weather?"

Both her parents were surprised to see her sit down on the floor and throw her arms around the neck of this self-invited and very uncouth visitor. For the girl forgot all of her trumpery concealments, in the warmth of her feeling for a poor lost dog.

Saracen looked at her, with a view to dignity. He had only seen her once before, when Pet brought him down (both for company and safeguard) and he was not a dog who would dream of recognizing a person to whom he had been rashly introduced. And he knew that he was in a mighty difficulty now, which made self-respect all the more imperative. However, on the whole, he had been pleased with Insie, at their first interview, and had patronized her—for she had an honest fragrance, and a little taste of salt—and now with a side-look he let her know that he did not wish to hurt her feelings, although his business was not with her. But if she wanted to give him some refreshment, she might do so, while he was considering.

The fact was, though he could not tell it,

and would scorn to do so if he could, that he had not had one bit to eat for more hours than he could reckon. That wicked ostler at Middleton had taken his money and disbursed it upon beer, adding insult to injury by remarking, in the hearing of Saracen (while strictly chained) that he was a deal too fat already. So vile a sentiment had deepened into passion the dog's ever dominant love of home; and when the darkness closed upon him, in an unknown hungry hole, without even a horse for company, any other dog would have howled; but this dog stiffened his tail with self-respect. He scraped away all the straw to make a clear area for his experiment, and then he stood up, like a pillar, or a fine kangaroo, and made trial of his weight against the chain. Feeling something give, or show propensity towards giving, he said to himself that here was one more triumph for him over the presumptuous intellect of man. The chain might be strong enough to hold a ship, and the great leathern collar to secure a bull; but the fastening of chain to collar was unsound, by reason of the rusting of a rivet.

Retiring to the manger for a better length of rush, he backed against the wall for a fulcrum to his spring, while the roll of his chest and the breadth of his loins quivered with volumed muscle. Then off like the charge of a cannon he dashed, the loop of the collar

flew out of the rivet, and the chain fell clanking on the paving-bricks. With grim satisfaction the dog set off in the track of the horse for Scargate Hall. And now he sat panting in the cottage of the gill, to tell his discovery, and to crave for help.

"Where do you come from, and what do you want?" asked Bart, as the dog soon beginning to recover, looked round at the door, and then back again at him, and jerked up his chin impatiently. "Insie, you seem to know this fine fellow. Where have you met him? And whose dog is he? Saracen! Why that is the name of the dog who is everybody's terror at Scargate."

"I gave him some water one day," said Insie; "when he was terribly thirsty. But he seems to know you, father, better than me. He wants you to do something, and he scorns me."

For Saracen, failing of articulate speech, was uttering volumes of entreaty with his eyes, which were large, and brown, and full of eager expression under eyebrows of rich tan; and then he ran to the door, put up one heavy paw and shook it, and ran back, and pushed the master with his nozzle, and then threw back his great head and long velvet ears, and opening his enormous jaws gave vent to a mighty howl which shook the roof.

"Oh, put him out, put him out; open the door!" exclaimed Mrs. Bart in fresh terror.

"If he is not a wolf, he is a great deal worse."

"His master is out in the snow," cried Bart; "perhaps buried in the snow, and he is come to tell us. Give me my hat, child, and my thick coat. See how delighted he is, poor fellow! Oh, here comes Maunder! Now lead the way, my friend. Maunder, go and fetch the other shovel. There is somebody lost in the snow, I believe. We must follow this dog immediately."

"Not till you both have had much plenty food," the mother said; "out upon the moors, this bad, bad night, and for leagues possibly to travel. My son and my husband are much too good. You bad dog, why did you come, pestilent? But you shall have food also. Insie, provide him. While I make to eat your father and your brother."

Saracen would hardly wait, starving as he was; but seeing the men prepare to start he made the best of it, and cleared out a colander of victuals in a minute.

"Put up what is needful for a starving traveller," Mr. Bart said to the ladies; "we shall want no lantern. The snow gives light enough, and the moon will soon be up. Keep a kettle boiling, and some warm clothes ready. Perhaps we shall be hours away; but have no fear. Maunder is the boy for snow drifts."

The young man being of a dark and silent

nature, quite unlike his father's, made no reply, nor even deigned to give a smile, but seemed to be wonderfully taken with the dog, who in many ways resembled him. Then he cast both shovels on his shoulder at the door, and strode forth, and stamped upon the path that he had cleared. His father took a stout stick, the dog leaped past them, and led them out at once upon the open moor.

"We are in for a night of it," said Mr. Bart, and his son did not contradict him.

"The dog goes first, then I, then you," he said to his father with his deep slow tone. And the elderly man, whose chief puzzle in life—since he had given up the problem of the world—was the nature of his only son, now wondered again, as he seldom ceased from wondering, whether this boy despised or loved him. The young fellow always took the very greatest care of his father, as if he were a child to be protected, and he never showed the smallest sign of disrespect. Yet Maunder was not the true son of his father, but of some ancestor, whose pride sprang out of dust, at the outrageous idea of a kettle-mending Bart, and embodied itself in this Maunder.

The large-minded father never dreamed of such a trifle, but felt in such weather, with the snow above his leggings, that sometimes it is good to have a large-bodied son.

CHAPTER VI.

A CLUE OF BUTTONS.

When Jack o' the Smithies met his old commander, as related by himself, at the house of Mr. Mordacks, everything seemed to be going on well for Sir Duncan, and badly for his sisters. The general factor, as he hinted long ago, possessed certain knowledge which the Middleton lawyer fondly supposed to be confined to himself and his fair clients. Sir Duncan refused to believe that the ladies could ever have heard of such a document as that which, if valid, would simply expel them; for, said he, "if they know of it, they are nothing less than thieves to conceal it and continue in possession. Of a lawyer I could fancy it; but never of a lady."

"My good sir," answered the sarcastic Mordacks; "a lady's conscience is not the same as a gentleman's, but bears more resemblance to a lawyer's. A lady's honour is of the very highest standard; but the standard depends upon her state of mind;

and that again depends upon the condition of her feelings. You must not suppose me to admit the faintest shadow of disrespect towards your good sisters; but ladies are ladies, and facts are facts; and the former can always surmount the latter; while a man is comparatively helpless. I know that Mr. Jellicorse, their man of law, is thoroughly acquainted with this interesting deed; his first duty was to apprise them of it; and that you may be quite sure he has done."

"I hope not. I am sure not. A lawyer does not always employ hot haste in an unwelcome duty."

"True enough, Sir Duncan. But the duty here was welcome. Their knowledge of that deed, and of his possession of it, would make him their master, if he chose to be so. Not that old Jellicorse would think of such a thing. He is a man of high principle, like myself; of a lofty conscience, and even sentimental. But lawyers are just like the rest of mankind. Their first consideration is their bread and cheese; though some of them certainly seem ready to accept it, even in the toasted form."

"You may say what you like, Mordacks. My sister Philippa is far too upright, and Eliza too good, for any such thing to be possible. However, that question may abide. I shall not move until I have some one to do it for. I have no great affection for a home

which cast me forth, whether it had a right to do so or not. But if we succeed in the more important matter, it will be my duty to recover the estates, for the benefit of another. You are certain of being on the track of my poor boy?"

"As certain as need be. And we will make it surer, when you meet me there the week after next. For the reasons I have mentioned, we must wait till then. Your yacht is at Yarmouth. You have followed my advice in approaching by sea, and not by land, and in hiring at Yarmouth, for the purpose. But you never should have come to York, Sir Duncan; this is a very great mistake of yours. They are almost sure to hear of it. And even your name given at our best Inn! But luckily they never see a newspaper at Scargate."

"I follow the tactics with which you succeed—all above board, and no stratagems. Your own letter brought me; but perhaps I am too old to be so impatient. Where shall I meet you, and on what day?"

"This day fortnight, at the Thornwick Inn, I shall hope to be with you at one o'clock, and perhaps bring somebody with me. If I fixed an earlier day, I should only disappoint you. For many things have to be delicately managed; and among them, the running of a certain cargo, without serious consequence. For that we may trust a certain very skilful youth. For the rest, you

must trust to a clumsier person, your humble land-agent and surveyor—titles inquired into and verified, at a tenth of solicitor's charges."

"Well," said Sir Duncan, "you shall verify mine; as soon as you have verified my son, and my title to him. Good-bye, Mordacks. I am sure you mean me well; but you seem to be very long about it."

"Hot climates breed impatience, sir. A true son of Yorkshire is never in a hurry. The general complaint of me, is concerning my wild rapidity."

"You are like the grocer, whose goods, if they have any fault at all, have the opposite one to what the customer finds in them. Well, good-bye, Mordacks. You are a trusty friend; and I thank you."

These words from Sir Duncan Yordas were not merely of commonplace. For he was a man of great self-reliance, quick conclusion, and strong resolve. These had served him well in India, and insured his fortune; while early adversity, and bitter losses, had tempered the arrogance of his race. After the loss of his wife and child, and the breach with all his relatives, he had led a life of peril, and hard labour, varied with few pleasures. When first he learned from Edinburgh that the ship conveying his only child to the care of kindly relatives was lost with all on board, he did all in his power to make inquiries. But the illness and death of his

wife, to whom he was deeply attached, overwhelmed him. For while with some people, "one blow drives out another," with others the second serves only to drive home, deepen, and perpetuate the first. For years he was satisfied to believe both losses irretrievable. And so he might still have gone on believing, except for a queer little accident.

Being called to Calcutta, upon Government business, he happened to see a pair of English sailors, lazily playing in a shady place by the side of the road, at hole-penny. One of them seemed to have his pocket cleared out, for just as Sir Duncan was passing, he cried, "Here Jack, you give me change of one of them, and I'll have at you again, my boy. As good as a guinea with these blessed niggers. Come back to their home, I b'lieve, they are, same as I wish I was; rale gold —ask this gen'leman."

The other swore that they were "naught but brass, and not worth a copper-farden;" until the tars, being too tipsy for much fighting, referred the question to Sir Duncan.

Three hollow beads of gold were what they showed him, and he knew them at once for his little boy's buttons; the workmanship being peculiar to one village of his district, and one family thereof. The sailor would thankfully have taken one rupee apiece for them; but Sir Duncan gave him thirty for the three—their full metallic value—upon his

pledging honour to tell all he knew about them, and make affidavit, if required. Then he told all he knew to the best of his knowledge, and swore to it, when sober; accepted a refresher, and made oath to it again, with some lively particulars added. And the facts that he deposed to, and deposited, were these.

Being down upon his luck, about a twelvemonth back, he thought of keeping company with a nice young woman, and settling down until a better time turned up; and happening to get a month's wages from a schooner of 95 tons at Scarborough, he strolled about the street a bit, and kept looking down the railings, for a servant-girl who might have got her wages in her work-box. Clean he was, and taut, and clever, beating up street in Sunday rig, keeping sharp look-out for a consort, and in three or four tacks he hailed one. As nice a young partner as a lad could want, and his meaning was to buckle to for the winter. But the night before the splicing-day, what happened to him he never could tell after. He was bousing up his jib, as a lad is bound to do, before he takes the breakers. And when he came to, he was twenty leagues from Scarborough on board of His Majesty's recruiting brig the "Harpy." He felt in his pocket for the wedding-ring, and instead of that, there were these three beads!

Sir Duncan was sorry for his sad disaster, and gave him ten more rupees to get over it. And then he discovered that the poor forsaken maiden's name was Sally Watkins. Sally was the daughter of a rich pawnbroker, whose frame of mind was often twisted out of keeping with its true contents. He had very fine feelings, and real warmth of sympathy; but circumstances seemed sometimes to lead them into the wrong channel, and induce him to kick his children out of doors. In the middle of the family he kicked out Sally, almost before her turn was come; and she took a place at 4*l.* a year, to disgrace his memory—as she said—carrying off these buttons, and the jacket, which he had bestowed upon her, in a larger interval.

There was no more to be learned than this from the intercepted bridegroom. He said that he might have no objection to go on with his love again, as soon as the war was over, leastways, if it was made worth his while; but he had come across another girl, at the Cape of Good Hope, and he believed that this time the Lord was in it, for she had been born in a caul, and he had got it. With such a dispensation Sir Duncan Yordas declined to interfere, but left the course of true love to itself, after taking down the sailor's name—"Ned Faithful."

However, he resolved to follow out the clue of beads, though without much hope of

any good result. Of the three in his possession, he kept one; and one he sent to Edinburgh, and the third to York; having heard of the great sagacity, vigour, and strict integrity of Mr. Mordacks, all of which he sharpened by the promise of a large reward upon discovery. Then he went back to his work, until his time of leave was due, after twenty years of arduous, and distinguished service. In troublous times, no private affairs, however urgent, should drive him from his post.

Now, eager as he was, when in England once again, he was true to his character, and the discipline of life. He had proof that the matter was in very good hands; and long command had taught him the necessity o obedience. Any previous Yordas would have kicked against the pricks, rushed forward, and scattered everything. But Sir Duncan was now of a different fibre. He left York at once, as Mordacks advised, and posted to Yarmouth, before the roads were blocked with snow, and while Jack o' the Smithies was returning to his farm. And from Yarmouth he set sail for Scarborough, in a sturdy little coaster, which he hired by the week. From Scarborough he would run down to Bridlington, not too soon, for fear of setting gossip going; but in time to meet Mordacks at Flamborough, as agreed upon.

That gentleman had other business in

hand, which must not be neglected; but he gave to this matter a very large share of his time, and paid five-and-twenty pounds for the trusty roadster, who liked the taste of Flamborough pond, and the salt air on the oats of widow Tapsy's stable, and now regularly neighed, and whisked his tail, as soon as he found himself outside Monk-Bar. By favour of this horse, and of his own sword and pistols, Mordacks spent nearly as much time now at Flamborough as he did in York; but unluckily he had been obliged to leave, on the very afternoon before the run was accomplished, and Carroway slain so wickedly; for he hurried home to meet Sir Duncan, and had not heard the bad news, when he met him.

That horrible murder was a sad blow to him, not only as a man of considerable kindness, and desire to think well of every one—so far as experience allows it—but also because of the sudden apparition of the law rising sternly in front of him. Justice in those days was not as now; her truer name was Nemesis. After such an outrage to the dignity of the realm, an example must be made, without much consideration whether it were the right one. If Robin Lyth were caught, there would be the form of trial, but the principal point would be to hang him. Like the rest of the world, Mr. Mordacks at first believed entirely in his guilt; but unlike the world, he did not desire to have him

caught, and brought straightway to the gallows. Instead of seeking him therefore, he was now compelled to avoid him, when he wanted him most; for it never must be said that a citizen of note had discoursed with such a criminal, and allowed him to escape. On the other hand, here he had to meet Sir Duncan, and tell him, that all those grand promises were shattered; that in finding his only son, all he had found was a cowardly murderer flying for his life, and far better left at the bottom of the sea. For once in a way, as he dwelled upon all this, the general factor became down-hearted; his vigorous face lost the strong lines of decision; and he even allowed his mouth to open, without anything to put into it.

But it was impossible for this to last. Nature had provided Mordacks with an admirably high opinion of himself, enlivened by a sprightly good will towards the world, whenever it wagged well with him. He had plenty of business of his own, and yet could take an amateur delight in the concerns of everybody; he was always at liberty to give good advice, and never under duty to take it; he had vigour of mind, of memory, of character, and of digestion; and whenever he stole a holiday from self-denial, and launched out after some favourite thing, there was the cash to do it with, and the health to do it pleasantly.

Such a man is not long depressed by a sudden misadventure. Dr. Upround's opinion in favour of Robin did not go very far with him; for he looked upon the rector as a man who knew more of divine than of human nature. But that fault could scarcely be found with a woman; or at any rate with a widow encumbered with a large family hanging upon the dry breast of the Government. And though Mr. Mordacks did not invade the cottage quite so soon as he would have done, if guided by strict business, he thought himself bound to get over that reluctance, and press her upon a most distressing subject, before he kept appointment with his principal.

The snow (which, by this time, had blockaded Scargate, impounded Jordas, and compelled Mr. Jellicorse to rest and be thankful for a hot mince-pie) although it had visited this eastern coast as well, was not deep enough there to stop the roads. Keeping head-quarters at the "Hooked Cod" now, and encouraging a butcher to set up again, (who had dropped all his money, in his hurry to get on) Geoffrey Mordacks began to make way into the outer crust of Flamborough.

In a council of the boats, upon a Sunday afternoon, every boat being garnished, for its rest upon the flat, and every master fisherman buttoned with a flower—the last flowers of the year, and bearing ice-marks in their eyes—a resolution had been passed that

the inland man meant well, had nought to do with Revenue, or Frenchmen either, or what was even worse, any outside fishers, such as oftentime came sneaking after fishing-grounds of Flamborough. Mother Tapsy stood credit for this strange man; and he might be allowed to go where he was minded, and to take all the help he liked to pay for.

Few men could have achieved such a triumph, without having married a Flamborough lass, which must have been the crown of all human ambition, if difficulty crowns it. Even to so great a man it was an added laurel, and strengthened him much in his opinion of himself. In spite of all disasters, he recovered faith in fortune; so many leading Flamborough men began to touch their hats to him! And thus he set forth before a bitter eastern gale, with the head of his seasoned charger bent towards the melancholy cot at Bridlington.

Having granted a new life of slaughter to that continually insolvent butcher, who exhibited the body of a sheep once more, with an eye to the approach of Christmas, this universal factor made it a point of duty to encourage him. In either saddle-bag he bore a 7 lb. leg of mutton—a credit to a sheep of that district then—and to show himself no traitor to the staple of the place, he strapped upon his crupper, in some oar-weed and old netting, a 20 lb. cod, who found it hard to

breathe his last, when beginning to enjoy horse-exercise.

"There is a lot of mouths to fill," said Mr. Mordacks, with a sigh, while his landlady squeezed a brown loaf of her baking into the nick of his big sword-strap; "and you and I are capable of entering into the condition of the widow and the fatherless."

"Hoonger is the waa of them, and victuals is the cure for it. Now mind you coom hame afore dark," cried the widow, to whom he had happened to say, very sadly, that he was now a widower. "To my moind, a sight o' more snaw is a coomin'; and what mah sard, or goon foight again it? Capting Moordocks, coom ye hame arly. T' hare sha' be doon to a toorn be fi' o'clock. Coom ye hame be that o'clock, if ye care for deener."

"I must have made a tender impression on her heart," Mr. Mordacks said to himself, as he kissed his hand to the capacious hostess; "such is my fortune, to be loved by everybody, while aiming at the sternest rectitude. It is sweet, it is dangerously sweet; but what a comfort! How that large-hearted female will baste my hare!"

CHAPTER VII.

A PLEASANT INTERVIEW.

CUMBERED as he was of body, and burdened with some cares of mind, the general factor ploughed his way with his usual resolution. A scowl of dark vapour came over the headlands, and under-ran the solid snow-clouds, with a scud, like bonfire smoke. The keen wind following the curves of land, and shaking the fringe of every white-clad bush, piped (like a boy through a comb) wherever stock or stub divided it. It turned all the coat of the horse the wrong way, and frizzed up the hair of Mr. Mordacks, which was as short as a soldier's, and tossed up his heavy riding-cape, and got into him all up the small of his back. Being fond of strong language he indulged in much; but none of it warmed him, and the wind whistled over his shoulders, and whirled the words out of his mouth.

When he came to the dip of the road, where it crosses the Dane-dyke, he pulled up his

horse for a minute, in the shelter of shivering fir-trees. "What a cursed bleak country! My fish is frozen stiff, and my legs are as dead as the mutton in the saddle-bags. Geoffrey, you are a fool," he said; "Charity is very fine, and business even better; but a good coal-fire is the best of all. But in for a penny of it, in for a pound. Hark! I hear some fellow fool equally determined to be frozen. I'll go at once and hail him; perhaps the sight of him will warm me."

He turned his horse down a little lane upon the left, where snow lay deep, with laden bushes overhanging it, and a rill of water bridged with bearded ice ran dark in the hedge-trough. And here he found a stout lusty man, with shining red cheeks, and keen blue eyes, hacking and hewing in a mighty maze of brambles.

"My friend, you seem busy. I admire your vast industry," Mr. Mordacks exclaimed, as the man looked at him, but ceased not from swinging his long hedge-hook. "Happy is the land that owns such men."

"The land dothn't own me. I own the land. I shall be pleased to learn what your business is upon it."

Farmer Anerley hated chaff, as a good agriculturist should do. Moreover he was vexed by many little griefs to-day, and had not been out long enough to work them off.

He guessed pretty shrewdly that this sworded man was "Moreducks,"—as the leading wags of Flamborough were gradually calling him—and the sight of a sword upon his farm (unless of an officer bound to it) was already some disquietude to an English farmer's heart. That was a trifle; for fools would be fools, and might think it a grand thing to go about with tools they were never born to the handling of; but a fellow who was come to take up Robin Lyth's case, and strive to get him out of his abominable crime, had better go back to the rogue's highway, instead of coming down the private road to Anerley.

"Upon my word I do believe," cried Mordacks with a sprightly joy, "that I have the pleasure of meeting at last the well-known Captain Anerley! My dear sir, I cannot help commending your prudence in guarding the entrance to your manor; but not in this employment of a bill-hook. From all that I hear, it is a Paradise indeed. What a haven in such weather as the present! Now Captain Anerley, I entreat you to consider whether it is wise to take the thorn so from the rose. If I had so sweet a place I would plant brambles, briars, blackthorn, furze, cratœgus, every kind of spinous growth, inside my gates, and never let anybody lop them. Captain, you are too hospitable."

Farmer Anerley gazed with wonder at this man, who could talk so fast for the first time

of seeing a body. Then feeling as if his hospitality were challenged, and desiring more leisure for reflection—"You better come down the lane, sir," he said.

"Am I to understand that you invite me to your house, or only to the gate where the dogs come out? Excuse me, I always am a most plain-spoken man."

"Our dogs never bite nobody but rogues."

"In that case, Captain Anerley, I may trust their moral estimate. I knew a farmer once who was a thorough thief in hay; a man who farmed his own land, and trimmed his own hedges; a thoroughly respectable and solid agriculturist. But his trusses of hay were always six pounds short; and if ever anybody brought a sample truss to steelyard, he had got a little dog, just seven pounds weight, who slipped into the core of it, being just a good hay-colour. He always delivered his hay in the twilight, and when it swung the beam he used to say, 'Come now, I must charge you for overweight.' Now, Captain, have you got such an honest dog as that?"

"I would have claimed him, that I would, if such a clever dog were weighed to me. But, sir, you have got the better of me. What a man for stories you be for sure! Come in to our fireplace."

Farmer Anerley was conquered by this tale, which he told fifty times every year

he lived thereafter, never failing to finish with—"What rogues they be, up York way!"

Master Mordacks was delighted with this piece of luck on his side. Many times he had been longing to get in at Anerley, not only from the reputation of good cheer there, but also from kind curiosity to see the charming Mary, who was now becoming an important element of business. Since Robin had given him the slip so sadly, a thing it was impossible to guard against, the best chance of hearing what became of him would be to get into the good graces of his sweetheart.

"We have been very sadly for a long time now," said the farmer, as he knocked at his own porch-door with the handle of his bill-hook; "there used to be one as was always welcome here; and a pleasure it was to see him make himself so pleasant, sir. But ever since the Lord took him home from his family, without a good-bye, as a man might say, my wife hath taken to bar the doors, whiles I am away and out of sight." Stephen Anerley knocked harder, as he thus explained the need of it; for it grieved him to have his house shut up.

"Very wise of them all to bar out such weather," said Mordacks, who read the farmer's thoughts like print. "Don't relax your rules, sir, until the weather changes. Ah, that was a very sad thing about the

Captain! As gallant an officer, and as single-minded, as ever killed a Frenchman in the best days of our navy."

"Single-minded is the very word to give him, sir; I sought about for it ever since I heard of him coming to an end like that, and doing of his duty in the thick of it. If I could only get a gentleman to tell me, or an officer's wife would be better still, what the manners is when a poor lady gets her husband shot, I'll be blest if I wouldn't go straight and see her, though they make such a distance betwixt us and the regulars. Oh, then, ye've come at last! No thief, no thief!"

"Father," cried Mary, bravely opening all the door, of which the ruffian wind made wrong by casting her figure in high relief—and yet a pardonable wrong; "father, you are quite wise to come home, before your dear nose is quite cut off. Oh, I beg your pardon, sir; I never saw you!"

"My fate in life is to be overlooked," Mr. Mordacks answered with a martial stride; "but not always, young lady, with such exquisite revenge. What I look at pays fifty-fold for being overlooked."

"You are an impudent, conceited man," thought Mary to herself, with gross injustice; but she only blushed, and said, "I beg your pardon, sir."

"You see, sir," quoth the farmer, with some severity, tempered, however, with a

smile of pride, "my daughter, Mary Anerley."

"And I take off my hat," replied audacious Mordacks, among whose faults was no false shame, "not only to salute a lady, sir, but also to have a better look."

"Well, well," said the farmer, as Mary ran away; "your city ways are high polite, no doubt; but my little lass is strange to them. And I like her better so, than to answer pert with pertness. Now come you in, and warm your feet a bit. None of us are younger than we used to be."

This was not Master Anerley's general style of welcoming a guest; but he hated new-fangled Frenchified manners, as he told his good wife, when he boasted by-and-by how finely he had put that old coxcomb down. "You never should have done it," was all the praise he got; "Mr. Mordacks is a business man, and business men always must relieve their minds." For no sooner now was the general factor introduced to Mistress Anerley, than she perceived clearly that the object of his visit was not to make speeches to young chits of girls, but to seek the advice of a sensible person, who ought to have been consulted a hundred times for once that she even had been allowed to open her mouth fairly. Sitting by the fire, he convinced her that the whole of the mischief had been caused by sheer neglect of her opinion. Everything she said was so exactly to the

point that he could not conceive how it should have been so slighted, and that she for her part begged him to stay and partake of their simple dinner.

"Dear madam, it cannot be," he replied; "alas, I must not think of it. My conscience reproaches me for indulging, as I have done, in what is far sweeter than even one of your dinners—a most sensible lady's society. I have a long bitter ride before me, to comfort the fatherless and the widow. My two legs of mutton will be thawed by this time in the genial warmth of your stable. I also am thawed, warmed, feasted I may say, by happy approximation to a mind so bright and congenial. Captain Anerley, madam, has shown true kindness in allowing me the privilege of exclusive speech with you. Little did I hope for such a piece of luck this morning. You have put so many things in a new and brilliant light, that my road becomes clear before me. Justice must be done; and you feel quite sure that Robin Lyth committed this atrocious murder because poor Carroway surprised him so when making clandestine love, at your brother Squire Popplewell's, to a beautiful young lady who shall be nameless. And deeply as you grieve for the loss of such a neighbour, the bravest officer of the British navy, who leaped from a strictly immeasurable height into a French ship, and scattered all her crew, and has since had a baby about three months old, as well as innumerable

children, you feel that you have reason to be thankful sometimes that the young man's character has been so clearly shown, before he contrived to make his way into the bosom of respectable families in the neighbourhood."

"I never thought it out quite so clear as that, sir; for I feel so sorry for everybody, and especially those who have brought him up, and those he has made away with."

"Quite so, my dear Madam; such are your fine feelings, springing from the goodness of your nature. Pardon my saying that you could have no other, according to my experience of a most benevolent countenance. Part of my duty, and in such a case as yours, one of the pleasantest parts of it, is to study the expression of a truly benevolent—"

"I am not that old, sir, asking of your pardon, to pretend to be benevolent. All that I lay claim to, is to look at things sensible."

"Certainly, yet with a tincture of high feeling. Now if it should happen that this poor young man were of very high birth, perhaps the highest in the county, and the heir to very large landed property, and a title, and all that sort of nonsense, you would look at him from the very same point of view."

"That I would, sir, that I would. So long as he was proclaimed for hanging. But naturally bound, of course, to be more sorry for him."

"Yes, from a sense of all the good things he must lose. There seems however, to be strong ground for believing—as I may tell you, in confidence, Dr. Upround does—that he had no more to do with it, than you or I, ma'am. At first, I concluded as you have done. I am going to see Mrs Carroway now. Till then, I suspend my judgment."

"Now that is what nobody should do, Mr. Mordacks. I have tried, but never found good come of it. To change your mind is two words against yourself; and you go wrong both ways, before and after."

"Undoubtedly you do, ma'am. I never thought of that before. But you must remember that we have not the gift of hitting—I might say of making the truth—with a flash, or a dash, as you ladies have. May I be allowed to come again?"

"To tell you the truth, sir, I am heartily sorry that you are going away at all. I could have talked to you all the afternoon; and how seldom I get the chance now, Lord knows. There is that in your conversation which makes one feel quite sure of being understood; not so much in what you say, sir,—if you understand my meaning—as in the way you look, quite as if my meaning was not at all too quick for you. My good husband is of a greater mind than I am, being nine and forty inches round the chest; but his mind seems somehow to come after mine, the

same as the ducks do, going down to our pond."

"Mistress Anerley, how thankful you should be! What a picture of conjugal felicity! But I thought that the drake always led the way."

"Never upon our farm, sir. When he doth, it is a proof of his being crossed with wild ducks. The same as they be round Flamborough."

"Oh, now I see the truth. How slow I am! It improves their flavour, at the expense of their behaviour. But seriously, madam, you are fit to take the lead. What a pleasant visit I have had! I must brace myself up for a very sad one now—a poor lady, with none to walk behind her."

"Yes, to be sure! It is very fine of me to talk. But if I was left without my husband, I should only care to walk after him. Please to give her my kind love, sir; though I have only seen her once. And if there is anything that we can do—"

"If there is anything that we can do," said the farmer, coming out of his corn-chamber; "we won't talk about it, but we'll do it, Mr. Moreducks."

The factor quietly dispersed this rebuke, by waving his hand at his two legs of mutton, and the cod which had thawed in the stable. "I knew that I should be too late," he said; "her house will be full of such little things as

these; so warm is the feeling of the neighbourhood. I guessed as much, and arranged with my butcher to take them back in that case; and he said they would eat all the better for the ride. But as for the cod, perhaps you will accept him. I could never take him back to Flamborough."

"Ride away, sir, ride away," said the farmer, who had better not have measured swords with Mordacks; "I were thinking of sending a cart over there, so soon as the weather should be opening of the roads up. But the children might be hankerin' after meat, the worse for all the snow-time."

"It is almost impossible to imagine such a thing. Universally respected, suddenly cut off, enormous family with hereditary hunger, all the neighbours well aware of straitened circumstances, the kindest-hearted county in Great Britain,—sorrow and abundance must have cloyed their appetites, as at a wealthy man's funeral. What a fool I must have been, not to foresee all that!"

"Better see than foresee," replied the farmer, who was crusty from remembering that he had done nothing; "neighbours likes to wait for neighbours to go in; same as two cows staring at a new-mown meadow."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

Cliffs snow-mantled, and storm-ploughed sands, and dark grey billows frilled with white, rolling and roaring to the shrill east wind, made the bay of Bridlington a very different sight from the smooth fair scene of August. Scarcely could the staggering colliers, anchored under Flamborough Head, (which they gladly would have rounded, if they could) hold their own against wind and sea, although the outer spit of sand tempered as yet the full violence of waves.

But if everything looked cold and dreary, rough, and hard, and bare of beauty, the cottage of the late lieutenant, standing on the shallow bluff, beaten by the wind, and blinded of its windows from within, of all things looked the most forlorn, most desolate, and freezing. The windward side was piled with snow, on the crest of which foam-pellets lay, looking yellow by comparison, and melting small holes with their brine. At the door no

footmark broke the drift; and against the vaporous sky no warmer vapour tufted the chimney-pots.

"I am pretty nearly frozen again," said Mordacks; "but that place sends another shiver down my back. All the poor little devils must be icicles at least."

After peeping through a blind, he turned pale betwixt his blueness, and galloped to the public-house abutting on the quay. Here he marched into the parlour, and stamped about, till a merry-looking landlord came to him. "Have a glass of hot, sir; how blue your nose is!" the genial master said to him. The reply of the factor cannot be written down, in these days of noble language. Enough that it was a terse malediction of the landlord, the glass of hot, and even his own nose. Boniface was no Yorkshireman; else would he have given as much as he got, at least in lingual currency. As it was, he considered it no affair of his, if a guest expressed his nationality. "You must have better orders than that to give, I hope, sir."

"Yes, sir, I have. And you have got the better of me; which has happened to me three times this day already, because of the freezing of my wits, young man. Now you go in to your best locker, and bring me your very best bottle of Cognac—none of your government-stuff, you know; but a sample

of your finest bit of smuggling. Why did I swear at a glass of hot? Why, because you are all such a set of cold scoundrels. I want a glass of hot, as much as man ever did. But how can I drink it, when women and children are dying—perhaps dead for all I know—for want of warmth and victuals? Your next-door neighbours almost, and a woman, whose husband has just been murdered! And here you are swizzling, and rattling your coppers. Good God, sir! The Almighty from heaven would send orders to have His own commandment broken."

Mr. Mordacks was excited, and the landlord saw no cause for it. "What makes you carry on, like this?" he said; "it was only last night we was talking in the tap-room of getting a subscription up, downright liberal. I said I was good for a crown, and take it out of the tick they owes me. And when you come to think of these hard times—"

"Take that; and then tell me if you find them softer." Suiting the action to the word, the universal factor did something omitted on his card, in the list of his comprehensive functions. As the fat host turned away, to rub his hands, with phosphoric enjoyment of his future generosity, a set of highly energetic toes, prefixed with the toughest York leather, and tingling for exercise, made him their example. The landlord flew up among his own pots and glasses, his head struck the

ceiling, which declined too long a taste of him; and anon a silvery ring announced his return to his own timbers.

"Accept that neighbourly subscription, my dear friend, and acknowledge its promptitude," said Mr. Mordacks; "and now be quick about your orders; peradventure, a second flight might be less agreeable. Now don't show any airs; you have been well treated, and should be thankful for the facilities you offer. I know a poor man, without any legs at all, who would be only too glad, if he could do what you have done."

"Then his taste must be a queer one," the landlord replied, as he illustrated sadly the discovery reserved for a riper age—that human fingers have attained their present flexibility, form, and skill, by habit of assuaging, for some millions of ages, the woes of human body.

"Now don't waste my time like that," cried Mordacks; and seeing him draw near again, his host became right active. "Benevolence must be inculcated," continued the factor, following strictly in pursuit; "I have done you a world of good, my dear friend; and reflection will compel you to heap every blessing on me."

"I don't know about that," replied the landlord.

It is certain, however, that this exhibition of philanthropic vigour had a fine effect.

In five minutes, all the resources of the house were at the disposal of this elevating agent, who gave his orders right and left, clapped down a bag of cash, and took it up again, and said, "Now just you mind my horse, twice as well as you mind your fellow-creatures. Take a leg of mutton out, and set it roasting. Have your biggest bed hot for a lot of frozen children. By the Lord, if you don't look alive, I'll have you up for murder." As he spoke, a stout fish-woman came in from the quay; and he beckoned to her, and took her with him.

"You can't come in," said a little weak voice, when Mr. Mordacks, having knocked in vain, began to prise open the cottage door; "mother is so poorly; and you mustn't think of coming in. Oh, whatever shall I do, if you won't stop when I tell you?"

"Where are all the rest of you? Oh, in the kitchen are they? You poor little atomy, how many of you are dead?"

"None of us dead, sir; without it is the baby;" here Geraldine burst into a wailing storm of tears. "I gave them every bit," she sobbed—"every bit, sir, but the rush-lights; and them they wouldn't eat, sir, or I never would have touched them. But mother is gone off her head, and baby wouldn't eat it."

"You are a little heroine," said Mordacks, looking at her—the pinched face, and the

hollow eyes, and the tottering blue legs of her. "You are greater than a queen. No queen forgets herself in that way."

"Please, sir, no; I ate almost a box of rushlights, and they were only done last night. Oh, if baby would have took to them!"

"Hot bread and milk in this bottle; pour it out; feed her first, Molly," Mr. Mordacks ordered; "the world can't spare such girls as this. Oh, you won't eat first! Very well; then the others shall not have a morsel, till your mouth is full. And they seem to want it bad enough. Where is the dead baby?"

In the kitchen, where now they stood, not a spark of fire was lingering; but some wood-ash still retained a feeble memory of warmth; and three little children (blest with small advance from babyhood) were huddling around, with hands, and faces, and sharp grimy knees, poking in for lukewarm corners; while two rather senior young Carroways were lying fast asleep, with a jack-towel over them. But Tommy was not there; that gallant Tommy, who had ridden all the way to Filey after dark, and brought his poor father to the fatal place.

Mordacks, with his short, bitter-sweet smile, considered all these little ones. They were not beautiful, nor even pretty; one of them was too literally a chip of the old block, for he had reproduced his dear father's scar;

and every one of them wanted a "wash and brush up," as well as a warming, and sound victualling. *Corruptio optimi pessima.* These children had always been so highly scrubbed, that the great molecular author of existence, dirt, resumed parental sway, with tenfold power of attachment and protection, the moment soap and flannel ceased their wicked usurpation.

"Please, sir, I couldn't keep them clean, I couldn't!" cried Geraldine, choking, both with bread and milk, and tears; "I had Tommy to feed through the coal-cellar door; and all the bits of victuals in the house to hunt up; and it did get so dark, and it was so cold. I am frightened to think of what mother will say, for my burning up all of her brushes, and the baskets. But please, sir, little Cissy was afreezing at the nose."

The three little children at the grate were peeping back over the pits in their shoulders, half frightened at the tall, strange man, and half ready to toddle to him for protection; while the two on the floor sat up and stared, and opened their mouths for their sister's bread and milk. Then Jerry flew to them, and squatted on the stones, and very nearly choked them with her spoon and basin.

"Molly, take two in your apron, and be off," said the factor to the stout fish-woman, who was simply full of staring, and of crying out "Oh lor!"—"pop them into the hot bed

at once; they want warmth first, and victuals by-and-by. Our wonderful little maid wants food most. I will come after you with the other three. But I must see this little wonder fill her own poor stomach first."

"But, please, sir, won't you let our Tommy out first?" cried Jerry, as the strong woman lapped up the two youngest in her woolsey apron, and ran off with them. "He has been so good, and he was too proud to cry, so soon as ever he found out, that mother couldn't hear him. And I gave him the most to eat of anybody else, because of him being the biggest, sir. It was all as black as ink, going under the door; but Tommy never minded."

"Wonderful merit! While you were eating tallow! Show me the coal-cellar, and out he comes. But why don't you speak of your poor mother, child?"

The child, who had been so brave, and clever, self-denying, laborious, and noble, avoided his eyes, and began to lick her spoon; as if she had had enough, starving though she was. She glanced up at the ceiling; and then her eyes fell, and the blue lids trembled over them. Mordacks saw that it was childhood's dread of death. "Show me where little Tommy is," he said; "we must not be too hard upon you, my dear. But what made your mother lock you up, and carry on so?"

"I don't know at all, sir," said Geraldine.

"Now don't tell a story," answered Mr. Mordacks; "you were not meant for lies; and you know all about it. I shall just go away, if you tell stories."

"Then all I know is this," cried Jerry, running up to him, and desperately clutching at his riding-coat; "the very night dear father was put into the pit-hole—oh, hoo, oh, hoo, oh, hoo!"

"Now we can't stop for that;" said the general factor, as he took her up, and kissed her, and the tears, which had vainly tried to stop, ran out of young eyes, upon well-seasoned cheeks; "you have been a wonder. I am like a father to you. You must tell me quickly, or else how can I cure it? We will let Tommy out then; and try to save your mother."

"Mother was sitting in the window, sir," said the child, trying strongly to command herself; "and I was to one side of her, and Tommy to the other, and none of us was saying anything. And then there came a bad wicked face against the window, and the man said, 'What was it you said to-day, ma'am?' And mother stood up; she was quite right then; and she opened the window, and she looked right at him, and she said, 'I spoke the truth, John Cadman. Between you and your God, it rests.' And the man said, 'You shut your black mouth up; or you

and your brats shall all go the same way. Mind one thing—you've had your warning.' Then mother fell away, for she was just worn out; and she lay upon the floor, and she kept on moaning, 'There is no God. There is no God!' after all she have taught us to say our prayers to. And there was nothing for baby to draw ever since."

For once in his life Mr. Mordacks held his tongue; and his face, which was generally fiercer than his mind, was now far behind it in ferocity. He thought within himself, "Well, I am come to something, to have let such things be going on in a matter which pertains to my office—pigeon-hole 100! This comes of false delicacy, my stumbling-block perpetually! No more of that. Now for action."

Geraldine looked up at him, and said, "Oh please, sir." And then she ran off, to show the way towards little Tommy.

The coal-cellar flew open before the foot of Mordacks; but no Tommy appeared, till his sister ran in. The poor little fellow was quite dazzled with the light; and the grime on his cheeks made the inrush of fresh air come, like wasps to him. "Now, Tommy, you be good," said Geraldine; "trouble enough has been made about you."

The boy put out his underlip, and blinked with great amazement. After such a quantity of darkness and starvation, to be told to

be good, was a little too bad; his sense of right and wrong became fluid with confusion; he saw no sign of anything to eat; and the loud howl of an injured heart began to issue from the coaly rampart of neglected teeth.

"Quite right, my boy," Mr. Mordacks said; "you have had a bad time, and are entitled to lament. Wipe your nose on your sleeve, and have at it again."

"Dirty, dirty things I hear. Who is come into my house like this? My house and my baby belong to me. Go away all of you. How can I bear this noise?"

Mrs. Carroway stood in the passage behind them, looking only fit to die. One of her husband's watch-coats hung around her, falling nearly to her feet; and the long clothes of her dead baby, which she carried, hung over it, shaking like a white dog's tail. She was standing with her bare feet well apart, and that swing of hip and heel alternate, which mothers, for a thousand generations, have supposed to lull their babies into sweet sleep.

For once in his life, the general factor had not the least idea of the proper thing to do. Not only did he not find it, but he did not even seek for it, standing aside rather out of the way, and trying to look like a calm spectator. But this availed him to no account whatever. He was the only man there; and the woman naturally fixed upon him.

"You are the man," she said, in a quiet and reasonable voice, and coming up to Mordacks with the manner of a lady; "you are the gentleman, I mean, who promised to bring back my husband. Where is he? Have you fulfilled your promise?"

"My dear madam, my dear madam, consider your children, and how cold you are. Allow me to conduct you to a warmer place. You scarcely seem to enter into the situation."

"Oh yes, I do, sir; thoroughly, thoroughly. My husband is in his grave; my children are going after him; and the best place for them. But they shall not be murdered. I will lock them up, so that they never shall be murdered."

"My dear lady, I agree with you entirely. You do the very wisest thing, in these bad times. But you know me well. I have had the honour of making your acquaintance in a pleasant manner. I feel for your children, quite as if I was—I mean, ma'am, a very fine old gentleman's affection. Geraldine, come and kiss me, my darling. Tommy, you may have the other side; never mind the coal, my boy; there is a coal-wharf quite close to my windows at home."

These children, who had been hiding behind Mr. Mordacks and Molly (who was now come back), immediately did as he ordered them; or rather Jerry led the way, and made Tommy come as well, by a signal which he

never durst gainsay. But while they saluted the general factor (who sat down upon a box to accommodate them), from the corners of their eyes they kept a timid, trembling, melancholy watch, upon their own mother.

Poor Mrs. Carroway was capable of wondering. Her power of judgment was not so far lost as it is in a dream—where we wonder at nothing, but cast off sceptic misery—and for the moment she seemed to be brought home from the distance of roving delusion, by looking at two of her children kissing a man, who was hunting in his pocket for his card.

"Circumstances, madam," said Mr. Mordacks, "have deprived me of the pleasure of producing my address. It should be in two of my pockets; but it seems to have strangely escaped from both of them. However, I will write it down, if required. Geraldine, dear, where is your school slate? Go and look for it, and take Tommy with you."

This surprised Mrs. Carroway, and began to make her think. These were her children —she was nearly sure of that—her own poor children, who were threatened from all sides with the likelihood of being done away with. Yet here was a man who made much of them, and kissed them; and they kissed him, without asking her permission!

"I scarcely know what it is about," she said; "and my husband is not here to help me."

"You have hit the very point, ma'am.

You must take it on yourself. How wonderfully clever the ladies always are! Your family is waiting for a Government supply, everybody knows that everybody in the world may starve, before Government thinks of supplying supply. I do not belong to the Government—although if I had my deserts, I should have done so—but fully understanding them, I step in, to anticipate their action. I see that the children of a very noble officer, and his admirable wife, have been neglected; through the rigour of the weather, and condition of the roads. I am a very large factor in the neighbourhood, who make a good thing out of all such cases. I step in; circumstances favour me; I discover a good stroke of business; my very high character, though much obscured by diffidence, secures me universal confidence. The little dears take to me; and I to them. They feel themselves safe, under my protection, from their most villanous enemies. They are pleased to kiss a man of strength, and spirit, who represents the Government."

Mrs. Carroway scarcely understood a jot of this. Such a rush of words made her weak brain go round; and she looked about vainly for her children, who had gladly escaped upon the chance afforded. But she came to the conclusion she was meant to come to—that this gentleman before her was the Government.

"I will do whatever I am told," she said, looking miserably round, as if for anything to care about; "only I must count my children first; or the Government might say there was not the proper number."

"Of all points, that is the very one that I would urge," Mordacks answered, without dismay. "Molly, conduct this good lady to her room. Light a good fire, as the Commissioners have ordered; warm the soup sent from the arsenal last night, but be sure that you put no pepper in it. The lady will go with you, and follow our directions. She sees the importance of having all her faculties perfectly clear, when we make our schedule, as we shall do in a few hours' time, of all the children; every one, with the date of their birth, and their Christian names; which nobody knows, so well as their own dear mother. Ah, how very sweet it is, to have so many of them; and to know the pride, the pleasure, the delight, which the nation feels in providing for the welfare of every little darling!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE THING IS JUST.

"WAS there ever such a man?" said Mr. Mordacks to himself, as he rode back to Flamborough against the bitter wind, after "fettling" the affairs of the poor Carroways, as well as might be for the present; "as if I had not got my hands too full already, now I am in for another plaguesome business, which will cost a lot of money, instead of bringing money in! How many people have I now to look after? In the first place, two vile wretches,—Rickon Goold, the ship-scuttler, and John Cadman, the murderer. —supposing that Dr. Upandown, and Mrs. Carroway, are right. Then, two drunken tars, with one leg between them; who may get scared of the law, and cut and run. Then, an outlawed smuggler, who has cut and run already; and a gentleman from India, who will be wild with disappointment, through the things that have happened since I saw him last. After that, a lawyer, who will fight

tooth and nail, of course, because it brings grist to his mill. That makes seven; and now to all these I have added number eight, and that the worst of all—not only a woman, but a downright mad one, as well as seven starving children. Charity is a thing that pays so slowly! That this poor creature should lose her head just now, is most unfortunate. I have nothing whatever to lay before Sir Duncan, when I tell him of this vile catastrophe, except the boy's own assertion, and the opinion of Dr. Upandown. Well, well, 'faint heart, &c.'—I must nurse the people round; without me they would all have been dead; virtue is its own reward. I hope the old lady has not burned my hare to death."

The factor might well say, that without his aid, that large family must have perished. Their neighbours were not to be blamed for this, being locked out of the house, and having no knowledge of the frost and famine, that prevailed within. Perhaps, when the little ones began to die, Geraldine might have escaped from a window, and got help in time to save some of them, if she herself had any strength remaining; but as it was, she preferred to sacrifice herself, and obey her mother. "Father always told me," she had said to Mr. Mordacks, when he asked her how so sharp a child could let things come to such a pitch, "that when he was out of the way, the first thing I was to mind always,

was to do what mother told me; and now he can't come back no more, to let me off from doing it."

By this time, the "Cod with the hook in his gills" was as much at the mercy of Mr. Mordacks, as if he had landed and were crimping him. Widow Precious was a very tough lady to get over, and she liked to think the worst she could of everybody—which proves, in the end, the most charitable course, because of the good-will produced by explanation—and for some time, she had stood in the Flamburian attitude of doubt towards the factor. But even a Flamburian may at last be pierced; and then (as with other pachydermatous animals) the hole, once made, is almost certain to grow larger. So by dint of good offices here and there, kind interest, and great industry, among a very simple and grateful race, he became the St. Oswald of that ancient shrine (as already has been hinted), and might do as he liked, even on the Sabbath-day. And as one of the first things he always liked to do, was to enter into everybody's business, he got into an intricacy of little knowledge, too manifold even for his many-fibred brain. But some of this ran into, and strengthened, his main clue, leading into the story he was labouring to explore, and laying before him, as bright as a diamond, even the mystery of ear-rings.

"My highly valued hostess, and admirable

cook," he said to Widow Precious, after making noble dinner, which his long snowy ride, and work at Bridlington, had earned; "in your knowledge of the annals of this interesting town, happen you to be able to recall the name of a certain man, John Cadman?"

"Ah, that ah deah," widow Tapsy answered, with a heavy sigh which rattled all the dishes on the waiter; "and sma' gude o' un, sma' gude, whativer. Geroot wi' un!"

The landlady shut her firm lips, with a smack, which Mordacks well knew by this time, though seldom foreclosed by it now, as he had been, before he became a Danish citizen. He was sure that she had some good reason for her silence; and the next day, he found that the girl who had left her home, through Cadman's villany, was akin, by her mother's side, to Mistress Precious. But he had another matter to discuss with her now, which caused him some misgivings, yet had better be faced manfully. In the safe philosophical distance of York from this strong landlady, he had (for good reasons of his own) appointed the place of meeting with Sir Duncan Yordas, at the rival hostelry, the Inn of Thornwick. Widow Precious had a mind of uncommonly large type, so lofty, and pure of all petty emotions, that if any one spoke of the Thornwick Inn, even upon her back premises, her dignity stepped in, and

said—" I can't abide the stinkin' naam o' un."

Of this persistently noble regard of a lower institution Mr. Mordacks was well aware; and it gave him pause, in his deep anxiety to spare a tender heart, and maintain the high standard of his breakfast kidneys. "Madam," he began; and then he rubbed his mouth, with the cross-cut out of the Jack-towel by the sink, newly set on table, to satisfy him, for a dinner-napkin. "Madam, will you listen, while I make an explanation?"

The landlady looked at him, with dark suspicions gathering.

"Joost spak' oot," she said, "whativer's woorkin' i' thah mahnd."

"I am bound to meet a gentleman, near Flamborough, to-morrow," Mr. Mordacks continued, with the effrontery of guilt; "who will come from the sea. And, as it would not suit him to walk far inland, he has arranged for the interview, at a poor little place, called the Thorny Wick, or the Stubby Wick, or something of that sort. I thought it was due to you, madam, to explain the reason of my entering, even for a moment—"

"Ah dawn't care. Sitha—they mah fettle thee there, if thow's fondhead enew."

Without another word, she left the room, clattering her heavy shoes at the door; and Mordacks foresaw a sad encounter on the morrow, without a good breakfast to "fettle"

him for it. It was not in his nature to dread anything much; and he could not see where he had been at all to blame; but gladly would he have taken 10 per cent. off his old contract, than meet Sir Duncan Yordas, with the news he had to tell him.

One cause of the righteous indignation, felt by the good mother Tapsy, was her knowledge, that nobody could land just now, in any cove under the Thornwick Hotel. With the turbulent snow-wind bringing in the sea, as now it had been doing for several days, even the fishermen's cobles could not take the beach, much less any stranger craft. Mr. Mordacks was sharp; but an inland factor is apt to overlook such little facts marine.

Upon the following day, he stood in the best room of the Thornwick Inn, which even then was a very decent place to any eyes uncast with envy—and he saw the long billows of the ocean, rolling before the steady blowing of the salt-tongued wind, and the broad white valleys that between them lay, and the vaporous generation of great waves. They seemed to have little gift of power for themselves, and no sign of any heed of purport; only to keep at proper distance from each other, and threaten to break over, long before they meant to do it. But to see what they did, at the first opposition of reef, or crag, or headland bluff, was a cure for any delusion about them, or faith in their liquid benevo-

lence. For spouts of wild fury dashed up into the clouds; and the shore, wherever any sight of it was left, weltered in a sadly frothsome state, like the chin of a Titan with a lather-brush at work.

"Why, bless my heart!" cried the keen-eyed Mordacks; "this is a check I never thought of. Nobody could land in such a surf as that, even if he had conquered all India. Landlord, do you mean to tell me any one could land? And if not, what's the use of your inn standing here?"

"Naw, sir, nawbody cud laun' joost neaw. Lee-ast waas, nut to ca' fur naw yell to dry hissen."

The landlord was pleased with his own wit —perhaps by reason of its scarcity—and went out to tell it in the tap-room while fresh; and Mordacks had made up his mind to call for something—for the good of the house and himself—and return with a sense of escape to his own inn; when the rough frozen road rang with vehement iron, and a horse was pulled up, and a man strode in. The landlord having told his own joke three times, came out with the taste of it upon his lips; but the stern dark eyes looking down into his, turned his smile into a frightened stare. He had so much to think of that he could not speak—which happens not only at Flamborough—but his visitor did not wait for the solution of his mental stutter. Without any

rudeness, he passed the mooning host, and walked into the parlour, where he hoped to find two persons.

Instead of two, he found one only, and that one standing with his back to the door, and by the snow-flecked window, intent upon the drizzly distance of the wind-struck sea. The attitude, and fixed regard, were so unlike the usual vivacity of Mordacks, that the visitor thought there must be some mistake; till the other turned round, and looked at him.

"You see a defeated, but not a beaten man," said the factor, to get through the worst of it. "Thank you, Sir Duncan, I will not shake hands. My ambition was to do so, and to put into yours another hand, more near and dear to it. Sir, I have failed. It is open to you to call me by any hard name that may occur to you. That will do you good; be a hearty relief; and restore me rapidly to self-respect, by arousing my anxiety to vindicate myself."

"It is no time for joking; I came here to meet my son. Have you found him, or have you not?"

Sir Duncan sat down, and gazed steadfastly at Mordacks. His self-command had borne many hard trials; but the prime of his life was over now; and strong as he looked, and thought himself, the searching wind had sought, and found, weak places in a sun-beaten

frame. But no man would be of noble aspect, by dwelling at all upon himself.

The quick intelligence of Mordacks—who was of smaller, though admirable type—entered into these things, at a flash. And throughout their interview, he thought less of himself, and more of another, than was at all habitual with him, or conducive to good work.

"You must bear with a very heavy blow," he said; "and it goes to my heart, to have to deal it."

Sir Duncan Yordas bowed, and said, "The sooner the better, my good friend."

"I have found your son, as I promised you I would," replied Mordacks, speaking rapidly; "healthy, active, uncommonly clever, a very fine sailor, and as brave as Nelson, of gallant appearance—as might be expected—enterprising, steadfast, respected, and admired, benevolent in private life, and a public benefactor. A youth of whom the most distinguished father might be proud. But—but—"

"Will you never finish?"

"But by the force of circumstances, over which he had no control, he became in early days a smuggler, and rose to an eminent rank in that profession."

"I do not care two pice for that; though I should have been sorry if he had not risen."

"He rose to such eminence, as to become

the High Admiral of smugglers on this coast, and attain the honours of outlawry."

"I look upon that as a pity. But still we may be able to rescind it. Is there anything more against my son?"

"Unluckily there is. A commander of the Coast-guard has been killed in discharge of his duty; and Robin Lyth has left the country, to escape a warrant."

"What have we to do with Robin Lyth? I have heard of him everywhere—a villain, and a murderer."

"God forbid that you should say so! Robin Lyth is your only son."

The man, whose word was law to myriads, rose without a word for his own case; he looked at his agent with a stern, calm gaze, and not a sign of trembling in his tall broad frame; unless, perhaps, his under-lip gave a little soft vibration to the grizzled beard, grown to meet the change of climate.

"Unhappily, so it is," said Mordacks, firmly meeting Sir Duncan's eyes; "I have proved the matter beyond dispute; and I wish I had better news for you."

"I thank you, sir. You could not well have worse. I believe it, upon your word alone. No Yordas ever yet had pleasure of a son. The thing is quite just. I will order my horse."

"Sir Duncan, allow me a few minutes first. You are a man of large judicial mind. Do you ever condemn any stranger, upon

rumour? And will you, upon that, condemn your son?"

"Certainly not. I proceed upon my knowledge of the fate between father and son, in our race."

"That generally has been the father's fault. In this case, you are the father."

Sir Duncan turned back, being struck with this remark. Then he sat down again; which his ancestors had always refused to do, and had rued it. His nature was rugged as theirs; but hardship, self-discipline, and knowledge of the world, had shaped it. And he spoke very gently, with a sad faint smile.

"I scarcely see how, in the present case, the fault can be upon the father's side."

"Not as yet, I grant you. But it would be so, if the father refused to hear out the matter, and joined in the general outcry against his son, without even having seen him, or afforded him a chance of self-defence."

"I am not so unjust, or unnatural, as that, sir. I have heard much about this—sad occurrence in the cave. There can be no question that the smugglers slew the officer. That—that very unfortunate young man may not have done it himself—I trust in God that he did not even mean it. Nevertheless, in the eye of the law, if he were present, he is as guilty, as if his own hand did it. Can you contend that he was not present?"

"Unhappily, I cannot. He himself admits it; and if he did not, it could be proved most clearly."

"Then all that I can do," said Sir Duncan, rising, with a heavy sigh, and a violent shiver caused by the chill of his long bleak ride, "is first to require your proofs, Mr. Mordacks, as to the identity of my child who sailed from India with this—this unfortunate youth; then to give you a cheque for 5000*l.*, and thank you for skilful offices, and great confidence in my honour. Then I shall leave with you what sum you may think needful for the defence, if he is ever brought to trial. And probably after that—well, I shall even go back to end my life in India. Most Englishmen like to come home to do it. But for me, there is no temptation now."

"My proofs are not arranged yet, but they will satisfy you. I shall take no 5000*l.* from you, Sir Duncan; though strictly speaking I have earned it. But I will take one thousand, to cover past and future outlay, including the possibility of a trial. The balance I shall live to claim yet, I do believe; and you to discharge it, with great pleasure; for that will not be, until I bring you a son, not only acquitted, but also guiltless; as I have good reason for believing him to be. But you do not look well, let me call for something."

"No, thank you. It is nothing. I am quite well, but not quite seasoned to my native

climate yet. Tell me your reasons for believing that."

"I cannot do that in a moment. You know what evidence is, a hundred times as well as I do. And in this cold room you must not stop. Sir Duncan, I am not a coddler, any more than you are. And I do not presume to dictate to you. But I am as resolute a man as yourself. And I refuse to go further with this subject; until you are thoroughly warmed and refreshed."

"Mordacks, you shall have your way," said his visitor, after a heavy frown, which produced no effect upon the factor; "you are as kind-hearted, as you are shrewd. Tell me, once more, what your conviction is; and I will wait for your reasons, till—till you are ready."

"Then, sir, my settled conviction is, that your son is purely innocent of this crime; and that we shall be able to establish that."

"God bless you, for thinking so, my dear friend. I can bear a great deal; and I would do my duty. But I did love that boy's mother so."

The general factor always understood his business; and he knew that no part of it compelled him now to keep watch upon the eyes of a stern, proud man.

"Sir, I am your agent, and I magnify mine office," he said, as he took up his hat to go forth; "one branch of my duty is to

fettle your horse; and in Flamborough they fettle them on stale fish." Mr. Mordacks strode, with a military tramp, and a loud shout for the landlord, who had finished his joke by this time, and was paying the penalties of reaction. "Gil Beilby, thoo'st nobbut a fondhead," he was saying to himself; "Thoo mun hev thy lahtel jawk, thof it crack'th thy own pure back." For he thought that he was driving two great customers away, by the flashing independence of too brilliant a mind; and many clever people of his native place had told him so. "Make a roaring fire, in that room," said Mordacks.

CHAPTER X.

STUMPED OUT.

"I THINK, my dear, that you never should allow mysterious things to be doing, in your parish, and everybody full of curiosity about them; while the only proper person to explain their meaning is allowed to remain, without any more knowledge, than a man locked up in York Castle might have. In spite of all the weather, and the noise the sea makes, I feel quite certain that important things, which never have any right to happen in our parish, are going on here, and you never interfere; which on the part of the rector, and the magistrate of the neighbourhood, to my mind is not a proper course of action. I am sure that I have not the very smallest curiosity; I feel very often that I should have asked questions, when it has become too late to do so, and when anybody else would have put them at the moment, and not had to be sorry afterwards."

"I understand that feeling," Dr. Upround

answered, looking at his wife for the third cup of coffee, to wind up his breakfast as usual; "and without hesitation, I reply that it naturally arises in superior natures. Janetta, you have eaten up that bit of broiled hake, that I was keeping for your dear mother!"

"Now really, papa, you are too crafty. You put my mother off, with a wretched generality, because you don't choose to tell her anything; and to stop me from coming to the rescue, you attack me with a miserable little personality. I perceive by your face, papa, every trick that rises; and without hesitation I reply, that they naturally arise in inferior natures."

"Janetta, you never express yourself well," Mrs. Upround insisted upon filial respect; "when I say 'well,' I mean—well, well, well, you know quite well what I mean, Janetta."

"To be sure, mamma, I always do. You always mean the very best meaning in the world; but you are not up to half of papa's tricks yet."

"This is too bad!" cried the father, with a smile.

"A great deal too bad!" said the mother, with a frown; "I am sure I would never have asked a word of anything, if I could ever have imagined such behaviour. Go away, Janetta, this very moment; your dear

father evidently wants to tell me something. Now, my dear, you were too sleepy last night; but your peace of mind requires you to unburden itself, at once, of all these very mysterious goings on."

"Well, perhaps I shall have no peace of mind, unless I do," said the rector, with a slight sarcasm, which missed her altogether; "only it might save trouble, my dear, if you would first specify the points which oppress your—or rather I should say, perhaps, my mind so much."

"In the first place, then," began Mrs. Uproud, drawing nearer to the Doctor, "who is that highly distinguished stranger, who cannot get away from the Thornwick Inn? What made him come to such a place, in dreadful weather; and if he is ill, why not send for Dr. Stirbacks? Dr. Stirbacks will think it most unkind of you; and after all he did for dear Janetta! And then, again, what did the milkman from Sewerby mean, by the way he shook his head, this morning, about something in the family at Anerley Farm? And what did that most unaccountable man, who calls himself Mr. Mordacks—though I don't believe that is his name at all—"

"Yes, it is, my dear; you never should say such things. He is well known at York, and for miles around; and I entertain very high respect for him."

"So you may, Dr. Uproud. You do *that*

too freely; but Janetta quite agrees with me about him. A man with a sword, that goes slashing about, and kills a rat, that was none of his business! A more straightforward creature than himself, I do believe; though he struts, like a soldier with a ramrod. And what did he mean, in such horrible weather, by dragging you out to take a deposition, in a place even colder than Flamborough itself—that vile rabbit-warren on the other side of Bempton? Deposition of a man who had drunk himself to death—and a Methodist, too, as you could not help saying."

"I said it, I know; and I am ashamed of saying it. I was miserably cold, and much annoyed about my coat."

"You never say anything to be ashamed of. It is when you do not say things, that you should rather blame yourself. For instance, I feel no curiosity whatever, but a kind-hearted interest in the doings of my neighbours. We very seldom get any sort of excitement; and when exciting things come all together, quite within the hearing of our stable-bell, to be left to guess them out, and perhaps be contradicted, destroys one finest feelings, and produces downright fidgets."

"My dear, my dear, you really should endeavour to emancipate yourself from such small ideas."

"Large words shall never divert me from my duty. My path of duty is distinctly

traced; and if a thwarting hand withdraws me from it, it must end in a bilious head-ache."

This was a terrible menace to the household, which was always thrown out of its course for three days, when the lady became thus afflicted.

"My first duty is to my wife," said the rector; "if people come into my parish with secrets, which come to my knowledge, without my desire, and without official obligation, and the faithful and admirable partner of my life threatens to be quite unwell—"

"Ill, dear, very ill—is what would happen to me."

"Then I consider that my duty is, to impart to her everything that cannot lead to mischief."

"How could you have any doubt of it, my dear? And as to the mischief, I am the proper judge of that."

Dr. Upround laughed, in his quiet inner way; and then, as a matter of form, he said, "My dear, you must promise most faithfully to keep whatever I tell you, as the very strictest secret."

Mrs. Upround looked shocked at the mere idea of her ever doing otherwise; which, indeed, as she said, was impossible. Her husband very nearly looked, as if he quite believed her; and then they went into his snug sitting-room, while the maid took away the breakfast things.

"Now don't keep me waiting," said the lady.

"Well, then, my dear," the rector began, after crossing stout legs stoutly, "you must do your utmost not to interrupt me, and in short—to put it courteously—you must try to hold your tongue, and suffer much astonishment in silence. We have a most distinguished visitor in Flamborough, setting up his staff at the Thornwick Hotel."

"Lord Nelson! I knew it must be. Janetta is so quick at things!"

"Janetta is too quick at things; and she is utterly crazy about Nelson. No, it is the famous Sir Duncan Yordas."

"Sir Duncan Yordas! Why, I never heard of him!"

"You will find that you have heard of him, when you come to think, my dear. Our Harry is full of his wonderful doings. He is one of the foremost men in India, though perhaps little heard of in this country yet. He belongs to an ancient Yorkshire family; and is, I believe, the head of it. He came here, looking for his son; but has caught a most terrible chill, instead of him; and I think we ought to send him some of your rare soup."

"How sensible you are! It will be the very thing. But first of all, what character does he bear? They do such things, in India."

"His character is spotless; I might say too romantic. He is a man of magnificent appearance, large mind, and lots of money."

"My dear, my dear, he must never stay there. I shudder to think of it, this weather. A chill is a thing upon the kidneys always. You know my electuary; and if we bring him round, it is high time for Janetta to begin to think of settling."

"My dear," said Dr. Uproud; "well, how suddenly you jump! I must put on my spectacles, to look at you. This gentleman must be getting on for fifty!"

"Janetta should have a man of some discretion; somebody she would not dare to snap at. Her expressions are so reckless, that a young man would not suit her. She ought to have some one to look up to; and you know how she raves about fame, and celebrity, and that. She really seems to care for very little else."

"Then she ought to have fallen in love with Robin Lyth, the most famous man in all this neighbourhood."

"Dr. Uproud, you say things on purpose to provoke me, when my remarks are unanswerable. Robin Lyth indeed! A sailor, a smuggler, a common working-man! And under that terrible accusation!"

"An objectionable party altogether, not even desirable as a grandson. Therefore say nothing more of Janetta, and Sir Duncan."

"Sometimes, my dear, the chief object of your existence seems to be to irritate me. What can poor Robin have to do with Sir Duncan Yordas?"

"Simply this. He is his only son. The proofs were completed, and deposited with me, for safe custody, last night, by that very active man of business, Geoffrey Mordacks, of York city."

"Well!" cried Mrs. Upround, with both hands lifted, and a high colour flowing into her unwrinkled cheeks; "from this day forth I shall never have any confidence in you again. How long—if I may dare to put any sort of question, have you been getting into all this very secret knowledge? And why have I never heard a word of it, till now? And not even now, I do believe, through any proper urgency of conscience on your part, but only because I insisted upon knowing. Oh, Dr. Upround, for shame! for shame!"

"My dear, you have no one but yourself to blame," her husband replied, with a sweet and placid smile. "Three times I have told you things, that were to go no further, and all three of them went twenty miles, within three days. I do not complain of it; far less of you. You may have felt it quite as much your duty to spread knowledge, as I felt it mine to restrict it. And I never should have let you get all this out of me now, if it had been at all incumbent upon me, to keep it quiet."

"That means that I have never got it out of you at all. I have taken all this trouble for nothing."

"No, my dear, not at all. You have worked well, and have promised not to say a word about it. You might not have known it, for a week at least; except for my confidence in you."

"Much of it I thank you for. But don't be cross, my dear, because you have behaved so atrociously. You have not answered half of my questions yet."

"Well, there were so many, that I scarcely can remember them. Let me see; I have told you who the great man is, and the reason that brought him to Flamborough. Then about the dangerous chill he has taken; it came through a bitter ride from Scarborough; and if Dr. Stirbacks came, he would probably make it still more dangerous. At least, so Mordacks says; and the patient is in his hands, and out of mine; so that Stirbacks cannot be aggrieved with us. On the other hand, as to the milkman from Sewerby, I really do not know why he shook his head. Perhaps he found the big pump frozen. He is not of my parish; and may shake his head, without asking my permission. Now I think that I have answered nearly all your questions."

"Not at all; I have not had time to ask them yet, because I feel so much above them.

But if the milkman meant nothing, because of his not belonging to our parish, the butcher does, and he can have no excuse. He says that Mr. Mordacks takes all the best meanings of a mutton-sheep, every other day, to Burlington."

"I know he does. And it ought to put us to the blush, that a stranger should have to do so. Mordacks is finding clothes, food, and firing, for all the little creatures poor Carroway left, and even for his widow, who has got a wandering mind. Without him, there would not have been one left. The poor mother locked in all her little ones, and starved them, to save them from some quite imaginary foe. The neighbours began to think of interfering; and might have begun to do it, when it was all over. Happily Mordacks arrived just in time. His promptitude, skill, and generosity saved them. Never say a word against that man again."

"My dear, I will not," Mrs. Upround answered, with tears coming into her kindly eyes. "I never heard of anything more pitiful. I had no idea Mr. Mordacks was so good. He looks more like an evil spirit. I always regarded him as an evil spirit; and his name sounds like it, and he jumps about so! But he ought to have gone to the rector of the parish."

"It is a happy thing, that he can jump about. The rector of the parish cannot do

so, as you know; and he lives two miles away from them, and had never even heard of it. People always talk about the rector of a parish, as if he could be everywhere, and see to everything. And few of them come near him, in their prosperous times. Have you any other questions to put to me, my dear?"

"Yes, a quantity of things which I cannot think of now. How it was that little boy—I remember it like yesterday—came ashore here, and turned out to be Robin Lyth; or at least to be no Robin Lyth at all, but the son of Sir Duncan Yordas? And what happened to the poor man in Bempton Warren?"

"The poor man died a most miserable death; but, I trust, sincerely penitent. He had led a sad, ungodly life, and he died at last of wooden legs. He was hunted to his grave, he told us, by these wooden legs; and he recognized in them Divine retribution; for the sin of his life was committed in timber. No sooner did any of those legs appear—and the poor fellow said they were always coming—than his heart began to patter, and his own legs failed him, and he tried to stop his ears, but his conscience would not let him."

"Now there!" cried Mrs. Uproud; "what the power of conscience is! He had stolen choice timber, perhaps ready-made legs."

"A great deal worse than that, my dear; he had knocked out a knot, as large as my shovel-hat, from the side of a ship, home-

bound from India; because he was going to be tried for mutiny, upon their arrival, at Leith it was, I think. He and his partners had been in irons, but unluckily they were just released. The weather was magnificent, a lovely summer's night, soft fair breeze, and every one rejoicing, in the certainty of home, within a few short hours. And they found home that night; but it was in a better world."

"You have made me creep all over. And you mean to say that a wretch, like that, has any hope of heaven! How did he get away, himself?"

"Very easily. A little boat was towing at the side. There were only three men upon deck, through the beauty of the weather; and two of those three were asleep. They bound and gagged the waking one, lashed the wheel, and made off in the boat wholly unperceived. There was Rickon Goold, the ring-leader, and four others; and they brought away a little boy, who was lying fast asleep; because one of them had been in the service of his father, and because of the value of his Indian clothes, which his ayah made him wear now, in his little cot, for warmth. The scoundrels took good care that none should get away, to tell the tale. They saw the poor "Golconda" sink, with every soul on board, including the captain's wife, and babies; then they made for land, and in the morning-fog were carried

by the tide towards our North Landing. One of them knew the coast as well as need be; but they durst not land, until their story was concocted, and everything fitted in to suit it. The sight of the rising sun, scattering the fog, frightened them, as it well might do; and they pulled into the cave, from which I always said, as you may now remember, Robin must have come—the cave which already bears his name.

"Here they remained all day, considering a plausible tale to account for themselves, without making mention of any lost ship, and trying to remove every trace of identity from the boat they had stolen. They had brought with them food enough to last three days, and an anker of rum from the steward's stores; and as they grew weary of their long confinement, they indulged more freely than wisely in the consumption of that cordial. In a word, they became so tipsy that they frightened the little helpless boy; and when they began to fight about his gold buttons, which were claimed by the fellow who had saved his life, he scrambled from the side of the boat upon the rock, and got along a narrow ledge, where none of them could follow him. They tried to coax him back; but he stamped his feet, and swore at them, being sadly taught bad language by the native servants, I dare say. Rickon Goold wanted to shoot him, for they had got a gun with them, and he feared

to leave him there. But Sir Duncan's former boatman would not allow it; and at dark they went away, and left him there. And the poor little fellow, in his dark despair, must have been led, by the hand of the Lord, through crannies too narrow for a man to pass. There is a well-known land-passage out of that cave; but he must have crawled out by a smaller one, unknown even to our fishermen, slanting up the hill, and having outlet in the thicket, near the place where the boats draw up. And so he was found by Robin Cockscroft, in the morning. They had fed the child with biscuit soaked in rum, which accounts for his heavy sleep, and wonderful exertions, and may have predisposed him for a contraband career."

"And perhaps for the very bad language which he used," said Mrs. Upround thoughtfully. "It is an extraordinary tale, my dear. But I suppose there can be no doubt of it. But such a clever child should have known his own name. Why did he call himself 'Izunsabe'?"

"That is another link in the certainty of proof. On board that unfortunate ship, and perhaps even before he left India, he was always called the "Young Sahib;" and he used, having proud little ways of his own, to shout, if anybody durst provoke him, 'I'se young Sahib, I'se young Sahib;' which we rendered into 'Izunsabe.' But his true name

is Wilton Bart Yordas, I believe; and the initials can be made out upon his gold beads, Mr. Mordacks tells me, among heathen texts."

"That seems rather shocking to good principles, my dear. I trust that Sir Duncan is a Christian at least; or he shall never set foot in this house."

"My dear, I cannot tell. How should I know? He may have lapsed, of course, as a good many of them do, from the heat of the climate, and bad surroundings. But that happens mostly from their marrying native women. And this gentleman never has done that, I do believe."

"They tell me that he is a very handsome man, and of most commanding aspect—the very thing Janetta likes so much. But what became of those unhappy, sadly tipsy sailors?"

"Well, they managed very cleverly, and made success of tipsiness. As soon as it was dark that night, and before the child had crawled away, they pushed out of the cave, and let the flood tide take them round the Head. They meant to have landed at Bridlington Quay, with a tale of escape from a Frenchman; but they found no necessity for going so far. A short-handed collier was lying in the roads; and the skipper, perceiving that they were in liquor, thought it a fine chance, and took some trouble to secure them. They told him that they had been

trying to run goods, and were chased by a revenue-boat, and so on. He was only too glad to be enabled to make sail; and by dawn they were under weigh for the Thames; and that was the end of the 'Golconda.'"

"What an awful crime! But you never mean to tell me, that the Lord let those men live and prosper."

"That subject is beyond our view, my dear. There were five of them; and Rickon Goold believed himself the last of them. But being very penitent, he might have exaggerated. He said that one was swallowed by a shark, at least his head was; and one was hanged for stealing sheep; and one for a bad sixpence; but the fate of the other (too terrible to tell you) brought this man down here, to be looking at the place, and to divide his time between fasting, and drinking, and poaching, and discoursing to the thoughtless. The women flocked to hear him preach, when the passion was upon him; and he used to hint at awful sins of his own, which made him earnest. I hope that he was so, and I do believe it. But the wooden-legged sailors, old Joe, and his son, who seem to have been employed by Mordacks, took him at his own word for a 'miserable sinner'—which, as they told their master, no respectable man would call himself—and in the most business-like manner they set to, to remove him to a

better world; and now they have succeeded."

"Poor man! After all, one must be rather sorry for him. If old Joe came stumping after me, for half an hour, I should have no interest in this life left."

"My dear, they stumped after him, the whole day long; and at night they danced a hornpipe outside his hut. He became convinced that the Prince of Evil was come, in that naval style, to fetch him; and he drank everything he could lay hands on, to fortify him for the contest. The end, as you know, was extremely sad for him; but highly satisfactory to them, I fear. They have signified their resolution to attend his funeral; and Mordacks has said, with unbecoming levity, that if they never were drunk before—which seems to me an almost romantic supposition—that night they shall be drunk, and no mistake."

"All these things, my dear," replied Mrs. Uproud, who was gifted with a fine vein of moral reflection, "are not as we might wish, if we ordered them ourselves. But still there is this to be said in their favour, that they have a large tendency towards righteousness."

CHAPTER XI.

A TANGLE OF VEINS.

HUMAN resolution, energy, experience, and reason, in its loftiest form, may fight against the doctor; but he beats them all, maintains at least his own vitality, and asserts his guineas. Two more resolute men than Mr. Mordacks, and Sir Duncan Yordas, could scarcely be found in those resolute times; they sternly resolved to have no sort of doctor; and yet within three days they did have one; and more than that, the very one they had positively vowed to abstain from.

Dr. Stirbacks let everybody know that he never cared, two flips of his thumb, for anybody. If anybody wanted him, they must come and seek him, and be thankful if he could find time to hear their nonsense. For he understood not the system only, but also the nature of mankind. The people at the Thornwick did not want him—very good, so much the better for him, and for them; because

the more they wanted him, the less would he go near them. Tut-tut-tut, he said; what did he want with crack-brained patients?

All this compelled him, with a very strong reluctance, to be dragged into that very place, the very same day; and he saw that he was not come an hour too soon. Sir Duncan was lying in a bitterly cold room, with the fire gone out, and the spark of his life not very far from following it. Mr. Mordacks was gone, for the day, upon business, after leaving strict orders that a good fire must be kept, and many other things attended to. But the chimney took to smoking, and the patient to coughing, and the landlady opened the window wide, and the fire took flight into the upper air. Sir Duncan hated nothing more than any fuss about himself. He had sent a man to Scarborough, for a little chest of clothes, for his saddle-kit was exhausted; and having promised Mordacks that he would not quit the house, he had nothing to do, except to meditate and shiver.

Gil Beilby's wife Nell, coming up to take orders for dinner, "got a dreadful turn" from what she saw; and ran down, exclaiming that the very best customer, that ever drew their latch, was dead. Without waiting to think, the landlord sent a most urgent message for Dr. Stirbacks. That learned man happened to be round the corner, although he lived at Bempton; he met the messenger,

cast to the winds all sense of wrong, and rushed to the succour of humanity.

That night, when the general factor returned, with the hunger excited by feeding the hungry, he was met at the door by Dr. Stirbacks, saying, "Hush, my good sir," before he had time to think of speaking. "You!" cried Mr. Mordacks, having met this gentleman, when Rickon Goold was near his last. "You! Then it must be bad indeed!"

"It is bad; and it must have been all over, sir, but for my being providentially at the cheese-shop. I say nothing to wound any gentleman's feelings, who thinks that he understands everything; but our poor patient, with the very best meaning, no doubt, has been all but murdered."

"Dr. Stirbacks, you have got him now; and of course you will make the best of him. Don't let him slip through your fingers, Doctor; he is much too good for that."

"He shall not slip through my fingers," said the little doctor, with a twinkle of self-preservation; "I have got him, sir; and I shall keep him, sir; and you ought to have put him in my hands long ago."

The sequel of this needs no detail. Dr. Stirbacks came three times a day; and without any disrespect to the profession, it must be admitted that he earned his fees. For Sir

Duncan's case was a very strange one, and beyond the best wisdom of the laity. If that chill had struck upon him, when his spirit was as usual, he might have cast it off, and gone on upon his business. But coming as it did, when the temperature of his heart was lowered by nip of disappointment, it went into him; as water on a duck's back is not cast away, when her rump-gland is out of order.

"A warm room, good victuals, and cheerful society,—these three are indispensable," said Dr. Stirbacks to Mr. Mordacks, over whom he began to try to tyrannize; "and admirable as you are, my good sir, I fear that your society is depressing. You are always in a fume to be doing something—a stew I might say, without exaggeration—a wonderful pattern of an active mind. But in a case of illness, we require the passive voice. Everything suggestive of rapid motion must be removed, and never spoken of. You are rapid motion itself, my dear sir. We get a relapse, every time you come in."

"You want me out of the way. Very well. Let me know when you have killed my friend. I suppose your office ends with that. I will come down, and see to his funeral."

"Mr. Mordacks, you may be premature in such prevision. Your own may come first, sir. Look well at your eyes, the next time you shave; and I fear you will descry those

radiant fibres in the iris, which always co-exist with heart-disease. I can tell you fifty cases, if you have time to listen."

"D—n your prognostics, sir!" exclaimed the factor rudely; but he seldom lathered himself thenceforth, without a little sigh of self-regard. "Now, Dr. Stirbacks," he continued, with a rally, "you may find my society depressing, but it is generally considered to be elevating; and that, sir, by judges of the highest order, and men of independent income. The head of your profession in the northern half of England, who takes a hundred guineas for every one you take, rejoices, sir—rejoices is not too strong a word to use, in my very humble society. Of course he may be wrong; but when he hears that Mr. Stirbacks, of Little Under-Bempton—is that the right address, sir?—speaks of my society as depressing—"

"Mr. Mordacks, you misunderstood my meaning. I spoke, with no reference to you whatever, but of all male society as enervating—if you dislike the word 'depressing'—relaxing, emollient, emasculating, from want of contradictory element; while I was proceeding to describe the need of strictly female society. The rector offers this; he was here just now. His admiration for you is unbounded. He desires to receive our distinguished patient, with the vast advantage of ladies' society, double-thick walls, and a

southern aspect; if you should consider it advisable."

"Undoubtedly, I do. If the moving can be done without danger; and of that you are the proper judge of course."

Thus they composed their little disagreement, with mutual respect, and some approaches to goodwill; and Sir Duncan Yordas, being skilfully removed, spent his Christmas (without knowing much about it) in the best and warmest bed-room of the rectory. But Mordacks returned, as an honest man should do, to put the laurel, and the misletoe, on his proper household gods. And where can this be better done, than in that grand old city, York? But before leaving Flamborough, he settled the claims of business and charity, so far as he could see them, and so far as the state of things permitted.

Foiled as he was, in his main object, by the murder of the revenue-officer, and the consequent flight of Robin Lyth, he had thoroughly accomplished one part of his task, the discovery of the "Golconda's" fate, and the history of Sir Duncan's child. Moreover his trusty agents, Joe of the Monument, and Bob his son, had relieved him of one thorny care, by the zeal and skill with which they worked. It was to them a sweet instruction, to watch, encounter, and drink down a rogue, who had scuttled a ship, and even defeated them at their own weapons, and made a text of them

to teach mankind. Dr. Upround had not exaggerated the ardour, with which they discharged this duty.

But Mordacks still had one rogue on hand, and a deeper one than Rickon Goold. In the course of his visits to Bridlington Quay, he had managed to meet John Cadman, preferring, as he always did, his own impressions to any other evidence. And his own impressions had entirely borne out the conviction of Widow Carroway. But he saw at once, that this man could not be plied with coarse weapons, like the other worn-out villain. He reserved him, as a choice bit for his own skill; and was careful not to alarm him yet. Only two things concerned him, as immediate in the matter—to provide against Cadman's departure from the scene, and to learn all the widow had to tell about him.

The widow had a great deal to say about that man; but had not said it yet, from want of power so to do. Mordacks himself had often stopped her, when she could scarcely stop herself; for, until her health should be set up again, any stir of the mind would be dangerous. But now, with the many things provided for her, good nursing, and company, and the kindness of the neighbours (who jealously rushed in, as soon as a stranger led the way), and the sickening of Tommy with the measles—which he had caught in the coal-cellar—she began to be started in a different

plane of life, to contemplate the past as a golden age (enshrining a diamond statue of a revenue officer in full uniform), and to look upon the present as a period of steel, when a keen edge must be kept against the world, for a defence of all the little seed of diamonds.

Now the weather was milder, as it generally is at Christmas time, and the snow all gone, and the wind blowing off the land again, to the great satisfaction of cod and conger. The cottage, which had looked such a den of cold and famine, with the blinds drawn down, and the snow piled up against the door, and not a single child-nose against the glass, was now quite warm again, and almost as lively as if Lieutenant Carroway were coming home to dinner. The heart of Mr. Mordacks glowed with pride, as he said to himself that he had done all this; and the glow was reflected on the cheeks of Geraldine, as she ran out to kiss him, and then jumped upon his shoulder. For, in spite of his rigid aspect and stern nose, the little lass had taken kindly to him; while he admired her for eating candles.

"If you please, you can come in here," said Jerry. "Oh, don't knock my head against the door."

Mrs. Carroway knew what he was come for; and although she had tried to prepare herself for it, she could not help trembling a little. The factor had begged her to have some friend present, to encourage and help

her in so grievous an affair; but she would not hear of it, and said she had no friend.

Mr. Mordacks sat down, as he was told to do, in the little room sacred to the poor lieutenant, and faithful even yet to the pious memory of his pipe. When the children were shut out, he began to look around, that the lady might have time to cry. But she only found occasion for a little dry sob.

"It is horrible, very, very horrible," she murmured with a shudder, as her eyes were following his; "but for his sake I endure it."

"A most sad and bitter trial, ma'am, as ever I have heard of. But you are bound to bear in mind, that he is looking down on you."

"I could not put up with it, without the sense of that, sir. But I say to myself, how much he loved it; and that makes me put up with it."

"I am quite at a loss to understand you, madam. We seem to be at cross purposes. I was speaking of—of a thing it pains me so to mention; and you say how much he loved—"

"Dirt, sir, dirt. It was his only weakness. Oh, my darling Charles, my blessed, blessed Charley! Sometimes I used to drive him almost to his end, about it; but I never thought his end would come; I assure you I never did, sir. But now I shall leave every-

thing, as he would like to see it—every table, and every chair, that he could write his name on it. And his favourite pipe with the bottom in it. That is what he must love to see, if the Lord allows him to look down. Only the children mustn't see it; for the sake of bad example."

"Mrs. Carroway, I agree with you most strictly. Children must be taught clean ways, even while they revere their father. You should see my daughter Arabella, ma'am. She regards me with perfect devotion. Why? Because I never let her do the things, that I myself do. It is the one true principle of government, for a nation, a parish, a household. How beautifully you have trained pretty Geraldine! I fear that you scarcely could spare her for a month, in the spring, and perhaps Tommy after his measles; but a visit to York would do them good, and establish their expanding minds, ma'am."

"Mr. Mordacks, I know not where we may be then. But anything that you desire is a law to us."

"Well said! Beautifully said! But I trust, my dear madam, that you will be here. Indeed it would never do for you to go away. Or rather, I should put it thus—for the purposes of justice, and for other reasons also, it is most important that you should not leave this place. At least, you will promise me that, I hope? Unless, of course, unless

you find the memories too painful. And even so, you might find comfort in some inland house, not far."

"Many people might not like to stop," the widow answered simply; "but to me it would be a worse pain, to go away. I sit, in the evening, by the window here. Whenever there is light enough to show the sea, and the beach is fit for landing on; it seems to my eyes that I can see the boat, with my husband standing up in it. He had a majestic attitude sometimes, with one leg more up than the other, sir, through one of his daring exploits; and whenever I see him, he is just like that; and the little children in the kitchen peep, and say, 'Here's daddy coming at last, we can tell by mammy's eyes;' and the bigger ones say, 'Hush! You might know better.' And I look again, wondering which of them is right; and then there is nothing, but the clouds and sea. Still when it is over, and I have cried about it, it does me a little good every time. I seem to be nearer to Charley; as my heart falls quietly into the will of the Lord."

"No doubt of it whatever. I can thoroughly understand it; although there is not a bit of resignation in me. I felt that sort of thing, to some extent, when I lost my angelic wife, ma'am, though naturally departed to a sphere more suited for her. And I often seem to think that still I hear her

voice, when a coal comes to table in a well-dish. Life, Mrs. Carroway, is no joke to bandy back; but trouble to be shared. And none share it fairly, but the husband and the wife, ma'am."

"You make it very hard for me to get my words," she said, without minding that her tears ran down, so long as she spoke clearly; "I am not of the lofty sort, and understand no laws of things; though my husband was remarkable for doing so. He took all the trouble of the taxes off, though my part was to pay for them. And in every other way he was a wonder, sir; not at all, because now he is gone above. That would be my last motive."

"He was a wonder, a genuine wonder," Mordacks replied, without irony. "He did his duty, ma'am, with zeal and ardour; a shining example, upon very little pay. I fear that it was his integrity, and zeal, truly British character, and striking sense of discipline, that have so sadly brought him to—to the condition of an example."

"Yes, Mr. Mordacks, it was all that. He never could put up with a lazy man; as anybody, to live, must have to do. He kept all his men, as I used to do our children, to word of command, and no answer. Honest men like it; but wicked men fly out. And all along, we had a very wicked man here."

"So I have heard from other good autho-

rity—a deceiver of women, a skulk, a dog. I have met with many villains; and I am not hot. But my tendency is to take that fellow by the throat, with both hands, and throttle him. Having thoroughly accomplished that, I should prepare to sift the evidence. Unscientific, illogical, brutal, are such desires; as you need not tell me. And yet, madam, they are manly. I hate slow justice, I like it quick—quick, or none at all, I say; so long as it is justice. Creeping justice is, to my mind, little better than slow revenge. My opinions are not orthodox; but I hope they do not frighten you."

"They do indeed, sir; or at least your face does; though I know how quick, and just you are. He is a bad man—too well I know it—but as my dear husband used to say, he has a large lot of children."

"Well, Mrs. Carroway, I admire you the more, for considering what he has not considered. Let us put aside that. The question is—guilty, or not guilty? If he is guilty, shall he get off, and innocent men be hanged for him? Six men are in jail at this present moment, for the deed which we believe he did. Have they no wives, no fathers, and mothers, no children—not to speak of their own lives? The case is one, in which the constitution of the realm must be asserted. Six innocent men must die, unless the crime is brought home to the guilty one. Even that is not all,

as regards yourself. You may not care for your own life, but you are bound to treasure it seven times over, for the sake of your seven children. While John Cadman is at large, and nobody hanged instead of him, your life is in peril, ma'am. He knows that you know him, and have denounced him. He has tried to scare you into silence; and the fright caused your sad illness. I have reason to believe that he, by scattering crafty rumours, concealed from the neighbours your sad plight, and that of your dear children. If so, he is worse than the devil himself. Do you see your duty now, and your interest also?"

Mrs. Carroway nodded gently. Her strength of mind was not come back yet, after so much illness. The baby lay now on its father's breast; and the mother's had been wild for it.

"I am sorry to have used harsh words," resumed Mordacks; "but I always have to do so. They seem to put things clearer; and without that, where would business be? Now I will not tire you, if I can help it, nor ask a needless question. What provocation had this man? What fanciful cause for spite, I mean?"

"Oh none, Mr. Mordacks, none whatever. My husband rebuked him for being worthless, and a liar, and a traitor; and he threatened to get him removed from the

force; and he gave him a little throw down from the cliff—but what little was done, was done entirely for his good."

"Yes, I see. And after that, was Cadman ever heard to threaten him?"

"Many times, in a most malicious way, when he thought that he was not heeded. The other men may fear to bear witness. But my Geraldine has heard him."

"There could be no better witness. A child, especially a pretty little girl, tells wonderfully with a jury. But we must have a great deal more than that. Thousands of men threaten, and do nothing; according to the proverb. A still more important point is—how did the muskets in the boat come home? They were all returned to the station, I presume. Were they all returned with their charges in them?"

"I am sure I cannot say how that was. There was nobody to attend to that. But one of them had been lost altogether."

"One of the guns never came back at all!" Mordacks almost shouted. "Whose gun was it, that did not come back?"

"How can we say? There was such confusion. My husband would never let them nick the guns; as they do at some of the stations, for every man to know his own. But in spite of that, each man had his own, I believe. Cadman declares that he brought home his; and nobody contradicted him. But, if I saw the

guns, I should know whether Cadman's is among them."

"How can you possibly pretend to know that, ma'am? English ladies can do almost anything. But surely, you never served out the guns?"

"No, Mr. Mordacks. But I have cleaned them. Not the inside, of course; that I know nothing of; and nobody sees that, to be offended. But several times I have observed, at the station, a disgraceful quantity of dust upon the guns, dust, and rust, and miserable blotches, such as bad girls leave in the top of a fish-kettle; and I made Charley bring them down, and be sure to have them empty; because they were so unlike what I have seen, on board of the ship where he won his glory, and took the bullet in his nineteenth rib."

"My dear madam, what a frame he must have had! But this is most instructive. No wonder Geraldine is brave. What a worthy wife for a naval hero! A lady who could handle guns!"

"I knew, sir, quite from early years, having lived near a very large arsenal, that nothing can make a gun go off, unless there is something in it. And I could trust my husband to see to that; and before I touched one of them, I made him put a brimstone match to the touch-hole. And I found it so pleasant to polish them; from having such

wicked things quite at my mercy. The wood was what I noticed most, because of understanding chairs. One of them had a very curious tangle of veins, on the left cheek behind the trigger; and I just had been doing for the children's tea, what they call 'crinkly crankly,'—treacle trickled (like a maze) upon the bread; and Tommy said, 'Look here, it is the very same upon this gun!' And so it was; just the same pattern on the wood! And while I was doing it, Cadman came up, in his low surly way, and said, 'I want my gun, missus, I never shoot with no other gun than that. Captain says I may shoot a seapie, for the little ones.' And so I always called it 'Cadman's gun.' I have not been able to think much yet. But if that gun is lost, I shall know who it was that lost a gun, that dreadful night."

"All this is most strictly to the purpose," answered Mordacks; "and may prove most important. We could never hope to get those six men off, without throwing most grave suspicion elsewhere; and unless we can get those six men off, their captain will come and surrender himself, and be hanged to a dead certainty. I doubted his carrying the sense of right so far, until I reflected upon his birth, dear madam. He belongs, as I may tell you now, to a very ancient family, a race that would run their heads into a noose, out of pure obstinacy; rather than

skulk off. I am of very ancient race myself; though I never take pride in the matter, because I have seen more harm than good of it. I always learned Latin at school so quickly, through being a grammatical example of descent. According to our pedigree, Caius Calpurnius Mordax Naso was the Governor of Britain, under Pertinax. My name means 'biting'; and bite I can, whether my dinner is before me, or my enemy. In the present case, I shall not bite yet; but prepare myself for doing so. I watch the proceedings of the Government; who are sure to be slow, as well as blundering. There has been no appointment to this command as yet, because of so many people wanting it. This patched-up peace, which may last about six months (even if it is ever signed) is producing confusion everywhere. You have an old fool put in charge of this station, till a proper successor is appointed."

"He is not like Captain Carroway, sir. But that concerns me little now. But I do wish, for my children's sake, that they would send a little money."

"On no account, think twice of that. That question is in my hands; and affords me one of the few pleasures I derive from business. You are under no sort of obligation about it. I am acting under authority. A man of exalted position, and high office—but never mind that, till the proper time comes; only

keep your mind in perfect rest, and attend to your children, and yourself. I am obliged to proceed very warily; but you shall not be annoyed by that scoundrel. I will provide for that, before I leave; also I will see the guns still in store, without letting anybody guess my motive. I have picked up a very sharp fellow here, whose heart is in the business thoroughly; for one of the prisoners is his twin-brother, and he lost his poor sweetheart through Cadman's villany, a young lass, who used to pick mussels, or something. He will see that the rogue does not give us the slip; and I have looked out for that, in other ways as well. I am greatly afraid of tiring you, my dear madam; but have you any other thing to tell me of this Cadman?"

"No, Mr. Mordacks; except a whole quantity of little things, that tell a great deal to me; but to anybody else would have no sense. For instance, of his looks, and turns, and habits, and tricks of seeming neither the one thing nor the other, and jumping all the morning, when the last man was hanged—"

"Did he do that, madam? Are you quite sure?"

"I had it on the authority of his own wife. He beats her; but still she cannot understand him. You may remember, that the man to be suspended was brought to the place, where —where—"

"Where he earned his doom. It is quite

right. Things of that sort should be done upon a far more liberal scale. Example is better than a thousand precepts. Let us be thankful, that we live in such a country. I have brought some medicine for brave Tommy, from our Dr. Stirbacks. Be sure that you stroke his throat, when he takes it. Boys are such rogues—"

"Well, Mr. Mordacks, I really hope that I know how to make my little boy take medicine!"

CHAPTER XII.

SHORT SIGHS, AND LONG ONES.

Now it came to pass that, for several months this neighbourhood, which had begun to regard Mr. Mordacks as its tutelary genius, —so great is the power of bold energy—lost him altogether; and with brief lamentation, began to do very well without him. So fugitive is vivacious stir; and so well content is the general world to jog along, in its old ruts. The Flamborough butcher once more subsided into a piscitarian; the postman, who had been driven off his legs, had time to nurse his grain again; Widow Tapsy relapsed into the very worst of taps, having none to demand good beverage; and a new rat, sevenfold worse than the mighty net-devourer (whom Mordacks slew; but the chronicle has been cut out, for the sake of brevity), took possession of his galleries, and made them pay. All Flamborough yearned for the "gentleman as did things," itself being rather of the contemplative vein, which flows

from immemorial converse with the sea. But the man of dry hand-and-heel activity came not; and the lanes forgot the echo of his Roman march.

The postman (with a wicked endeavour of hope to beget faith from sweet laziness) propagated a loose report, that death had claimed the general factor, through fear of any rival in activity. The postman did not put it so; because his education was too good for long words to enter into it; but he put his meaning, in a shorter form, than a smattering of distant tongues leaves to us. The butcher (having doubt of death, unless by man administered) kicked the postman out of his expiring shop, where large hooks now had no sheep for bait; and Widow Tapsy, filled with softer liquid form of memory, was so upset by the letter-man's tale, that she let off a man, who owed four gallons, for beating him as flat as his own bag. To tell of these things may take time; but time is thoroughly well spent, if it contributes a trifle towards some tendency, on anybody's part, to hope that there used to be, even in this century, such a thing as gratitude.

But why did Mr. Mordacks thus desert his favourite quest, and quarters, and the folk in whom he took most delight—because so long inaccessible? The reason was as sound as need be—important business of his own had called him away into Derbyshire. Like every true

son of stone and crag, he required an annual scratch against them, and hoped to rest among them, when the itch of life was over. But now he had hopes of even more than that; of owning a good house and fair estate, and henceforth exerting his remarkable powers of agency, on his own behalf. For his cousin, Calpurnius Mordacks, the head of the family, was badly ailing, and having lost his only son in the West Indies, had sent for this kinsman, to settle matters with him. His offer was generous and noble; to wit, that Geoffrey should take, not the property alone, but also his second cousin, fair Calpurnia; though not without her full consent. Without the lady, he was not to have the land; and the lady's consent must be secured, before her father ceased to be a sound testator.

Now, if Calpurnia had been kept in ignorance of this arrangement, a man possessing the figure, decision, stature, self-confidence, and other high attributes of our Mordacks, must have triumphed in a week at latest. But with that candour, which appears to have been so strictly entailed in the family, Colonel Calpurnius called them in; and there (in the presence of the testator, and of each other) they were fully apprised of this rather urgent call upon their best and most delicate emotions. And the worst of it was (from the gentleman's point of view), that the contest was unequal. The golden apples were not his to

cast, but Atalanta's. The lady was to have the land, even without accepting love. Moreover he was fifty per cent. beyond her in age; and Hymen would make her a mamma, without invocation of Lucina. But highest and deepest woe of all, most mountainous of obstacles, was the lofty sky-line of his nose, inherited from the Roman. If the lady's corresponding feature had not corresponded, in other words, if her nose had been chubby, snub, or even Greek, his bold bridge must have served him well, and even shortened access to rosy lips, and tender heart. But, alas, the fair one's nose was also of the fine imperial type, truly admirable in itself, but (under one of nature's strictest laws) coy of contact with its own male expression. Love—whose joy, and fierce prank, is to buckle to the plated pole ill-matched forms and incongruous spirits—did not fail of her impartial freaks. Mr. Mordacks had to cope with his own kin; and found the conflict so severe, that not a breath of time was left him, for anybody's business but his own.

If luck was against him in that quarter (although he would not own it yet) at York, and Flamborough, it was not so. No crisis arose to demand his presence; no business went amiss, because of his having to work so hard at love. There came, as there sometimes does in matters pressing, tangled, and exasperating, a quiet period, a gentle lull,

a halcyon time when the jaded brain reposes, and the heart may hatch her own mares'-nests. Underneath that tranquil spell, lay fond Joe and Bob (with their cash to spend), Widow Precious (with her beer laid in), and Widow Carroway, with a dole at last extorted from the Government; while Anerley Farm was content to hearken the creak of waggon, and the ring of flail; and the rector of Flamborough once more rejoiced in the bloodless war, that breeds good will.

For Sir Duncan Yordas was a fine chess-player, as many Indian officers of that time were; and now that he was coming to his proper temperature (after three months of barbed stab of cold, and the breach of the seal of the seventy-seventh phial of Doctor Stirbacks), in gratitude for that miraculous escape, he did his very best to please everybody. To Dr. Upround, he was an agreeable, and penetrative companion; to Mrs. Upround, a gallant guest, with a story for every slice of bread and butter; to Janetta, a deity combining the perfections of Jupiter, Phœbus, Mars, and Neptune (because of his yacht), without any of their drawbacks; and to Flamborough, more largely speaking, a downright good sort of gentleman, combining a smoke with a chaw—so they understood cigars—and not above standing still sometimes, for a man to say some sense to him.

But before Mr. Mordacks left his client

under Dr. Uproud's care, he had done his best to provide that mischief should not come of gossip; and the only way to prevent that issue is to preclude the gossip. Sir Duncan Yordas, having lived so long in a large commanding way, among people who might say what they pleased of him, desired no concealment here, and accepted it unwillingly. But his agent was better skilled in English life, and rightly foresaw a mighty buzz of nuisance —without any honey to be brought home— from the knowledge of the public that the Indian hero had begotten the better-known apostle of free trade. Yet it might have been hard to persuade Sir Duncan to keep that great fact to himself; if his son had been only a smuggler, or only a fugitive from a false charge of murder. But that which struck him in the face, as soon as he was able to consider things, was the fact that his son had fled and vanished, leaving his underlings to meet their fate. "The smuggling is a trifle," exclaimed the sick man; "our family never was law-abiding, and used to be large cattle-lifters; even the slaying of a man, in hot combat, is no more than I myself have done, and never felt the worse for it. But to run away, and leave men to be hanged, after bringing them into the scrape himself, is not the right sort of dishonour for a Yordas. If the boy surrenders, I shall be proud to own him. But until he does that, I agree with

you, Mordacks, that he does not deserve to know who he is."

This view of the case was harsh perhaps, and showed some ignorance of free-trade questions, and of English justice. If Robin Lyth had been driven, by the heroic view of circumstances, to rush into embrace constabular, would that have restored the other six men to family sinuosities? Not a chance of it. Rather would it treble the pangs of jail —where they enjoyed themselves—to feel that anxiety about their pledges to fortune, from which the free Robin relieved them. Money was lodged, and paid, as punctual as the Bank, for the benefit of all their belongings. There were times when the sailors grumbled a little, because they had no ropes to climb; but of any unfriendly rope impending they were too wise to have much fear. They knew that they had not done the deed; and they felt assured, that twelve good men would never turn round in their box, to believe it.

Their captain took the same view of the case. He had very little doubt of their acquittal, if they were defended properly; and of that, a far wealthier man than himself, the Chancellor of the exchequer of free-trade, Master Rideout of Malton, would take good care, if the money left with Dr. Upround failed. The surrender of Robin would simply hurt them, unless they were convicted; and in that case he would yield himself. Sir

Duncan did not understand these points; and condemned his son unjustly. And Mordacks was no longer there, to explain such questions, in his sharp clear way.

Being in this sadly disappointed state, and not thoroughly delivered from that renal chill (which the north-east wind, coming over the leather of his valise, had inflicted) this gentleman, like a long-pendulous grape, with the ventilators open, was exposed to the delicate insidious billing of little birds, that love something good. It might be wrong, indeed it must be wrong, and a foul slur upon fair sweet love, to insinuate that Indian gold, or rank, or renown, or vague romance, contributed towards what came to pass. Miss Janetta Upround, up to this time of her life, had laughed at all the wanton tricks of Cupid; and whenever the married women told her, that her time would be safe to come, and then she might understand their behaviour,—they had always been ordered to go home, and do their washing. And this made it harder for her to be mangled by the very tribulation she had laughed at.

Short little sighs were her first symptom, and a quiet way of going up the stairs—which used to be a noisy process with her—and then a desire to know something of history, and a sudden turn of mind towards soup. Sir Duncan had a basin every day, at twelve o'clock; and Janetta had orders to see him

do it, by strict institution of Stirbacks. Those orders she carried out with such zeal, that she even went so far as to blow upon the spoon; and she did look nice, while doing it. In a word—as there is no time for many—being stricken, she did her best to strike; as the manner of sweet women is.

Sir Duncan Yordas received it well. Being far on towards her futurity in years, and beyond her whole existence, in experience and size, he smiled at her ardour, and short vehemence to please him, and liked to see her go about; because she turned so lightly. Then the pleasant agility of thought began to make him turn to answer it; and whenever she had the best of him in words, her bright eyes fell, as if she had the worst. "She doesn't even know that she is clever!" said the patient to himself, "and she is the first person I have met with yet, who knows which side of the line Calcutta is!"

The manner of those benighted times was to keep from young ladies important secrets, which seemed to be no concern of theirs. Miss Upround had never been told what brought this visitor to Flamborough, and although she had plenty of proper curiosity, she never got any reward for it. Only four Flamburians knew that Sir Duncan was Robin Lyth's papa—or as they would put it (having faster hold of the end of the stick next to them) that Robin Lyth was the son

of Sir Duncan. And those four were, by force of circumstance, Robin Cockscroft, and Joan his wife, the rector, and the rectoress. Even Dr. Stirbacks (organically inquisitive as he was, and ill-content to sniff at any bottle with the cork tied down), by mastery of Mordacks, and calm dignity of rector, was able to suspect a lot of things, but to be sure of none of them; and suspicion, according to its usual manner, never came near the truth at all. Miss Uproundtherefore had no idea, that if she became Lady Yordas, which she very sincerely longed to be, she would, by that event, be made the stepmother of a widely celebrated smuggler. While her Indian hero, having no idea of her flattering regard as yet, was not bound to enlighten her upon that point.

At Anerley Farm, the like ignorance prevailed; except that Mistress Anerley, having a quick turn for romance, and liking to get her predictions confirmed, recalled to her mind, (and recited to her husband, in far stronger language), what she had said, in the clover-blossom time, to the bravest man that ever lived, the lamented Captain Carroway. Captain Carroway's dauntless end, so thoroughly befitting his extraordinary exploits, for which she even had his own authority, made it the clearest thing in all the world, that every word she said to him must turn out Bible-true. And she had begged him, and one might be certain

that he had told it, as a good man must, to his poor dear widow,—not to shoot at Robin Lyth; because he would get a thousand pounds, instead of a hundred for doing it. She never could have dreamed to find her words come true so suddenly; but here was an Indian Prince come home, who employed the most pleasant-spoken gentleman; and he might know, who it was he had to thank, that even in the cave, the Captain did not like to shoot that long-lost heir; and from this time out, there was no excuse for Stephen, if he ever laughed at anything that his wife said. Only on no account must Mary ever hear of it; for a bird in the hand was worth fifty in the bush; and the other gone abroad, and under accusation, and very likely born of a Red Indian mother. Whereas Harry Tanfield's father, George, had been as fair as a foal, poor fellow; and perhaps if the Church-books had been as he desired, he might have kept out of the churchyard, to this day.

"And me in it!" the farmer answered with a laugh—"dead for love of my wife, Sophy; as woudn't a' been my wife, nor drawn nigh upon fi' pound this very week for feathers, fur, and ribbon-stuff! Well, well! George would a' come again, to think of it. How many times have I seen him go with a sixpence in the palm of 's hand, and think better of the King upon it, and worser of the poor chap, as were worn out, like the tail

of it! Then back go the sixpence into George's breeches; and out comes my shilling, to the starving chap, on the sly, and never mentioned. But for all that, I think, like enow, old George mought a' managed to get up to heaven."

"Stephen, I wish to hear nothing of that. The question concerns his family, not ours; as Providence has seen fit to arrange. Now what is your desire to have done with Mary? William has made his great discovery at last; and if we should get the 10,000*l.*, nobody need look down on us."

"I should like to see any one look down on me," Master Anerley said, with his back set straight; "a' mought do so once, but a' would be sorry afterwards. Not that I would hinder him of 's own way; only that he better keep out of mine. Sometimes, when you go thinking of your own ideas, you never seem to bear in mind, what my considerations be."

"Because you cannot follow out the quickness of the way I think. You always acknowledge, that, my dear."

"Well, well. Quick churn spoileth butter. Like Willie with his perpetual motion. What good to come of it, if he hath found out? And a' might, if ever a body did, from the way he goeth jumping about for ever, and never hold fast to anything. A nice thing 'twould be, for the fools to say, perpetual motion come from Anerley Farm!"

"You never will think any good of him, Stephen, because his mind comes from my side. But wait till you see the 10,000*l*."

"That I will; and thank the Lord to live so long. But, to come to common sense,—how was Mary, and Harry, a'carrying on this afternoon?"

"Not so very bad, father; and nothing good to speak of. He kept on very well from the corners of his eyes; but she never corresponded, so to speak—same as—you know."

"The same as you used to do, when you was young. Well, manners may be higher stylish now. Did he ask her about the hayrick?"

"That he did. Three or four times over; exactly as you said it to him. He knew that was how you got the upper hand of me, according to your memory, but not mine; and he tried to do it, the very same way; but the Lord makes a lot of change, in thirty years of time. Mary quite turned her nose up at any such riddle, and he pulled his spotted handkerchief out of that new hat of his; and the faggot never saw fit to heed even the colour of his poor red cheeks. Stephen, you would have marched off for a week, if I had behaved to you so."

"And the right way too; I shall put him up to that. Long sighs only leads to turn-up noses. He plays too knuckle-down at it.

You should go on with your sweetheart, very mild at first; just a'feeling for her finger-tips; and emboldening of her, to believe that you are frightened, and bringing her to peep at you, as if you was a black-bird, ready to pop out of sight. That makes 'em wonderful curious and eager, and sticks you into 'em, like prickly spinach. But you mustn't stop too long, like that. You must come out large, as a bull runs up to gate; and let them see that you could smash it, if you liked, but feel a goodness in your heart, that keeps you out of mischief. And then they comes up, and they says, 'poor fellow!'"

"Stephen, I do not approve of such expressions, or any such low opinions. You may know how you went on. Such things may have answered once; because of your being—yourself, you know. But Mary, although she may not have my sense, must have her own opinions. And the more you talk of what we used to do—though I never remember your trotting up, like a great bull roaring, to any kind of gate—the less I feel inclined to force her. And who is Harry Tanfield, after all?"

"We know all about him," the farmer answered; "and that is something to begin with. His land is worth fifteen shillings an acre less than ours, and full of kid-bine. But for all that, he can keep a family, and is a good home-dweller. However, like the rest

of us, in the way of women, he must bide his bolt, and bode it."

"Father," the mistress of the house replied, "I shall never go one step out of my way, to encourage a young man, who makes you speak so lightly of those you owe so much to. Harry Tanfield may take his chance for me."

"So a' may for me, mother; so a' may for me. If a'was to have our Mary, his father George would be coming up between us, out of his peace in Churchyard, more than he doth a'ready; and a'comes too much a'ready. Why poppet, we were talking of you—fie, fie, listening!"

"No, now, father," Mary Anerley answered, with a smile at such a low idea; "you never had that to find fault with me, I think. And if you are plotting against me, for my good—as mother loves to put it—it would be the best way to shut me out, before you begin to do it."

"Why, bless my heart and soul," exclaimed the farmer, with a most crafty laugh, for he meant to kill two birds with one stone—"if the lass hathn't got her own dear mother's tongue, and the very same way of turning things! There never hath been such a time as this here. The childer tell us what to do; and their mothers tell us what not to do. Better take the business off my hands, and sell all they turnips as is rotting. Women

is cheats, and would warrant 'em sound, with the best to the top of the bury. But mind you one thing—if I retires from business, like brother Popplewell, I shall expect to be supported; cheap, but very substantial."

"Mary, you are wicked to say such things," Mistress Anerley began, as he went out; "when you know that your dear father is such a substantial silent man!"

CHAPTER XIII.

A BOLD ANGLER.

As if in vexation at being thwarted by one branch of the family, Cupid began to work harder at the other, among the moors and mountains. Not that either my lady Philippa, or gentle Mistress Carnaby, fell back into the snares of youth; but rather that youth, contemptuous of age, leaped up, and defied everybody but itself, and cried tush to its own welfare.

For as soon as the trance of snow was gone, and the world (emboldened to behold itself again) smiled up from genial places; and the timid step of peeping Spring awoke a sudden flutter in the breast of buds; and streams (having sent their broken anger to the sea) were pleased to be murmuring clearly again, and enjoyed their own flexibility; and even stern mountains and menacing crags, allowed soft light to play with them—at such a time, prudence found very narrow house-room in the breast of young Lancelot, otherwise, "Pet."

"If Prudence be present, no Divinity is absent," according to high authority; but the author of the proverb must have first excluded Love from the list of Divinities. Pet's breast, or at any rate his chest, had grown under the expansive enormity of love; his liver moreover (which, according to poets, both Latin and Greek, is the especial throne of love) had quickened its proceedings from the exercise he took; from the same cause, his calves increased so largely, that even Jordas could not pull the agate buttons of his gaiters through their holes. In a word, he gained flesh, muscle, bone, and digestion, and other great bodily blessings, from the power believed by the poets to upset, and annihilate, every one of them. However, this proves nothing anti-poetical; for the essence of that youth was to contradict experience.

Jordas had never, in all his born days, not even in the thick of the snowdrift, found himself more in a puzzle, than now; and he could not even fly for advice, in this matter, to Lawyer Jellicorse. The first great gift of nature, expelled by education, is gratitude. A child is full of gratitude, or at least has got the room for it; but no full-grown mortal, after good education, has been known to keep the rudiments of thankfulness. But Jordas had a stock of it—as much as can remain, to any one superior to the making of a cross.

Now the difficulty of it was, that Jordas called to mind, every morning when he saw snow, and afterwards when he saw anything white, that he must have required a grave, and not got it (in time to be any good to him) without the hard labour, strong endurance, and brotherly tendance of the people of the gill. Even the three grand fairy-gifts of Lawyer Jellicorse himself might scarcely have saved him; although they were no less than as follows, in virtue—the tip of a tongue that had never told a lie (because it belonged to a bullock slain young), a flask of old Scotch whiskey, and a horn comfit-box of Irish snuff. All these three had stood him in good stead; especially the last, which kept him wide awake, and enabled him to sneeze a yellow hole in the drift; whenever it threatened to engulf his beard. Without those three, he could never have got on; but with all the three, he could never have got out, if Bat, and Maunder, of the gill had not come to his succour, in the very nick of time. Not only did they work hard for hours, under the guidance of Saracen (who was ready to fly at them, if they left off), but when at length they came on Jordas, in his last exhaustion, with the good horse rubbing up his chin, to make him warmer, they did a sight of things, which the good Samaritan, having finer climate, was enabled to dispense with. And when they had set him on his

legs again, finding that he could not use them yet, they hoisted him on the back of Maunder, who was strong; and the whole of that expedition ended at the little cottage in the gill. But the kindness of the inhabitants was only just beginning; for when Jordas came to himself, he found that his off-foot—as Marmaduke would have called it—the one which had ridden with a north-east aspect, was frozen as hard as a hammer, and as blue as a pistol-barrel. Mrs. Bart happened to have seen such cases in her native country; and by her skilful treatment, and never wearying care, the poor fellow's foot was saved and cured, though at one time he despaired of it. Marmaduke also was restored, and sent home to his stable, some days before his rider was in a condition to mount him.

In return for all these benefits, how could the dog-man, without being worse than a dog, go and say to his ladies, that mischief was breeding between their heir, and a poor girl, who lived in a corner of their land? If he had been ungrateful, or in any way a sneak, he might have found no trouble in this thing; but being, as he was, an honest, noble-hearted fellow, he battled severely in his mind, to set up the standard of the proper side to take. For such matters, Pet cared not one jot. Crafty as he was, he could never understand that Jordas, and Welldrum, were not the same man, one half working out

of doors, and the other in. For him it was enough that Jordas would not tell, probably because he was afraid to do so; and Pet resolved to make him useful. For Lancelot Carnaby was very sharp indeed, in espying what suited his purpose. His set purpose was to marry Insie Bart, in whom he had sense enough to perceive his better, in every respect but money and birth; in which two he was before her, or at any rate supposed so. He was proud as need be, of his station in life; but he reasoned—if the process of his mind was reason—that being so exalted he might please himself; that his wife would rise to his rank, instead of lowering him; that her father was a man of education, and a gentleman, although he worked with his own hands; and that Insie was a lady, though she went to fill a pitcher.

For one happy fact, the youth deserved some credit; or rather perhaps his youth deserved it for him. He was madly in love with Insie, and his passion could not be of very high spiritual order; but the idea of obtaining her dishonourably never occurred to his mind for one moment. He knew her to be better, purer, and nobler than himself, in every way; and he felt, though he did not want to feel it, that her nature gave a lift to his. Insie, on the other hand, began to like him better, and to despise him less and less; his reckless devotion to her made its way;

and in spite of all her common sense, his beauty, and his lordly style, had attractions for her young romance. And, at last, her heart began to bound, like his, when they were together. "With all thy faults, I love thee still," was the loose condition of her youthful mind.

Into every combination—however steep, and deep, be the gill of its quiet incubation—a number of people and of things peep in, and will enter (like the cuckoo) at the glimpse of a white feather; or even without it, unless beak and claw are shown. And now the intruder into Pet's love-nest had the right to look in, and to pull him out neck-and-crop, unless he sat there legally. Whether birds discharge fraternal duty, is a question for *Notes and Queries*, even in the present most positive age. Sophocles says that the clever birds feed their parents, and their benefactors; and men ascribe piety to them, in fables; as a needful ensample to one another.

Be that as it may, this Maunder Bart, when his rather slow attention was once aroused, kept a sharp watch upon his young landlord's works. It was lucky for Pet, that he meant no harm; and that Maunder had contemptuous faith in him. Otherwise Insie's brother would have shortly taken him up, by his gaiters, and softly beaten his head in against a rock. For Mr. Bart's son was of

bitter, morose, and almost savage nature, silent, moody, and as resolute as death. He resented, and darkly repined at the loss of position, and property, of which he had heard; and he scorned the fine sentiments which had led to nothing at all substantial. It was not in his power to despise his father, for his mind felt the presence of the larger one; but he did not love him, as a son should do; neither did he speak out his thoughts to anybody, beyond a few mutters to his mother. But he loved his gentle sister, and found in her a goodness, which warmed him up to think about getting some, upon his own account.

Such thoughts however were fugitive; and Maunder's more general subject of brooding was the wrong he had suffered, through his father. He was living, and working, like a peasant, or a miner; instead of having horses, and dogs, and men, and the right to kick out inferior people—as that baby Lancelot Carnaby had—for no other reason, that he could find, than the magnitude of his father's mind. He had gone into the subject with his father, long ago—for Mr. Bart felt a noble pride in his convictions—and the son lamented, with all his heart, the extent of his own father's mind. In his lonely walks, heavy hours, and hard work—which last he never grudged, for his strength required outlet—he pondered continually upon one thing; and now he seemed to see a chance of doing it. The first step,

in his upward course, would be Insie's marriage with Lancelot.

Pet, who had no fear of any one but Maunder, tried crafty little tricks to please him; but instead of earning many thanks, got none at all; which made him endeavour to improve himself. Mr. Bart's opinion of him now began to follow the course of John Smithies'; and Smithies looked at it in one light only (ever since Pet so assaulted him, and then trusted his good-will, across the dark moors) and that light was, that "when you come to think of him, you mustn't be too hard upon him, after all." And one great excellence of this youth was, that he cared not a doit for general opinion, so long as he got his own special desire.

His desire was, not to let a day go by, without sight, and touch of Insie. These were not to be had at a moment's notice, nor even by much care; and five times out of six, he failed of so much as a glimpse, or a word of her. For the weather, and the time of year, have much to say concerning the course of the very truest love; and worse than the weather itself, too often, is the cloudy caprice of maiden mind.

Insie's father must have known, what attraction drew this youth to such a cold unfurnished spot; and if he had been like other men, he would either have nipped in the bud this passion, or for selfish reasons, fostered

it. But being of large theoretical mind, he found his due outlet in giving advice.

It is plain at a glance, that in such a case, the mother is the proper one to give advice; and the father the one to act strenuously. But now Mrs. Bart, who was a very good lady, and had gone through a world of trouble, from the want of money—the which she had cast away, for sake of something better—came to the forefront of this pretty little business, as Insie's mother, vigorously.

"Christophare," she said to her husband, "not often do I speak, between us, of the affairs it is wise to let alone. But now, of our dear child Inesa, it is just that I should insist something. Mandaro, which you call English Maunder, already is destroyed for life, by the magnitude of your good mind. It is just, that his sister should find the occasion of reversion to her proper grade of life. For you, Christophare, I have abandoned all; and have the good right to claim something from you. And the only thing that I demand is one—let Inesa return to the lady."

"Well," said Mr. Bart, who had that sense of humour, without which no man can give his property away; "I hope that she never has departed from it. But, my dear, as you make such a point of it, I will promise not to interfere; unless there is any attempt to do wrong, and entrap a poor boy who does not know his own mind. Insie is his equal, by birth,

and education; and perhaps his superior, in that which comes foremost, now-a-days—the money. Dream not, that he is a great catch, my dear; I know more of that matter than you do. It is possible that he may stand at the altar, with little to settle upon his bride, except his bright waistcoat, and gaiters."

"Tush, Christophare! You are, to my mind, always an enigma."

"That is as it should be, and keeps me interesting still. But this is a mere boy-and-girl romance. If it meant anything, my only concern would be, to know whether the boy was good. If not, I should promptly kick him back to his own door."

"From my observation, he is very good,—to attend to his rights, and make the utmost of them."

Mr. Bart laughed; for he knew that a little hit at himself was intended; and very often now, as his joints began to stiffen, he wished that his youth had been wiser. He stuck to his theories still; but his practice would have been more of the practical kind, if it had come back to be done again. But his children, and his wife, had no claim to bring up anything; because everything was gone, before he undertook their business. However he obtained reproach—as always seems to happen—for those doings of his early days, which led to their existence. Still

he liked to make the best of things; and laughed, instead of arguing.

For a short time, therefore, Lancelot Carnaby seemed to have his own way in this matter, as well as in so many others. As soon as spring weather unbound the streams, and enlarged both the spots, and the appetite of trout (which mainly thrive together) Pet became seized, by his own account, with insatiable love of angling. The beck of the gill, running into the Lune, was alive, in those unpoaching days, with sweet little trout, of a very high breed, playful, mischievous, and indulging (while they provoked) good hunger. These were trout, who disdained to feed basely on the ground, when they could feed upward, ennobling almost every gulp, with a glimpse of the upper creation. Mrs. Carnaby loved these "graceful creatures," as she always called them, when fried well; and she thought it so good, and so clever, of her son, to tempt her poor appetite with them.

"Philippa, he knows; perhaps your mind is absent," she said, as she put the fifth trout on her plate, at breakfast, one fine morning; "he feels that these little creatures do me good; and to me it becomes a sacred duty, to endeavour to eat them."

"You seem to succeed very well, Eliza."

"Yes, dear, I manage to get on a little; from a sort of sporting feeling, that appeals to me. Before I begin to lift the skins of

any of these little darlings, I can see my dear boy standing over the torrent, with his wonderful boldness, and bright eagle eyes—"

"To pull out a fish of an ounce and a half. Without any disrespect to Pet, whose fishing apparel has cost 20*l*., I believe that Jordas catches every one of them."

Sad to say, this was even so; Lancelot tried, once or twice, for some five minutes at a time, throwing the fly as he threw a skittle-ball; but finding no fish at once respond to his precipitance, down he cast the rod, and left the rest of it to Jordas. But, inasmuch as he brought back fish, whenever he went out fishing, and looked as brilliant, and picturesque, as a salmon-fly, in his new costume, his mother was delighted; and his aunt, being full of fresh troubles, paid small heed to him.

For, as soon as the roads became safe again, and an honest attorney could enter "horse-hire" in his bill, without being too chivalrous, and the ink that had clotted in the good-will time, began to form black blood again, Mr. Jellicorse himself resolved, legitimately to set forth, upon a legal enterprise. The winter had shaken him slightly—for even a solicitor's body is vulnerable; and well for the clerk of the weather it is, that no action lies against him—and his good wife told him to be very careful, although he looked as young as ever. She had no great opinion of the people he was going to, and was sure that

they would be too high and mighty, even to see that his bed was aired. For her part, she hoped that the reports were true, which were now getting into every honest person's mouth; and if he would listen to a woman's common sense, and at once go over to the other side—it would serve them quite right, and be the better for his family, and give a good lift to his profession. But his honesty was stout; and vanquished even his pride in his profession.

CHAPTER XIV.

PRINCELY TREATMENT.

"THIS then is what you have to say," cried my Lady Philippa, in a tone of little gratitude, and perhaps not purely free from wrath; "this is what has happened, while you did nothing?"

"Madam, I assure you," Mr. Jellicorse replied, "that no one point has been neglected. And truly I am bold enough—though you may not perceive it—to take a little credit to myself, for the skill, and activity of my proceedings. I have a most conceited man against me; no member at all of our honoured profession; but rather inclined to make light of us. A gentleman—if one may so describe him—of the name of 'Mordacks;' who lives in a den, below a bridge in York, and has very long harassed the law, by a sort of Cheap-jack, slap-dash, low-minded style of doing things. 'Jobbing' I may call it—cheap and nasty jobbing—not at all the proper thing, from a correct point of view. 'A catch-penny fellow,' that's the

proper name for him—I was trying to think of it, half the way from Middleton."

"And now, in your eloquence, you have hit upon it. I can easily understand, that such a style of business would not meet with your approbation. But, Mr. Jellicorse, he seems to me, to have proved himself considerably more active, in his way—however objectionable that may be—than you, as our agent, have shown yourself."

The cheerful, expressive, and innocent face of Mr. Jellicorse protested now. By nature, he was almost as honest as Geoffrey Mordacks himself could be; and in spite of a very long professional career, the original element was there; and must be charged for.

"I cannot recall to my memory," he said, "any instance of neglect on my part. But if that impression is upon your mind, it would be better for you, to change your legal advisers, at an early opportunity. Such has been the frequent practice, madam, of your family. And but for that, none of this trouble could exist. I must beg you, either to withdraw the charge of negligence, which I understand you to have brought; or else to appoint some gentleman of greater activity, to conduct your business."

With the haughtiness of her headstrong race, Miss Yordas had failed as yet to comprehend, that a lawyer could be a gentleman. And even now, that idea scarcely broke upon

her, until she looked hard at Mr. Jellicorse. But he, having cast aside all deference for the moment, met her stern gaze with such courteous indifference, and poise of self-composure, that she suddenly remembered, that his grandfather had been the master of a pack of foxhounds.

"I have made no charge of negligence; you are hasty, and misunderstand me," she answered, after waiting for him to begin again, as if he were a rash aggressor; "it is possible, that you desire to abandon our case, and conceive affront, where none is meant whatever."

"God forbid!" Mr. Jellicorse exclaimed, with his legal state of mind returning. "A finer case never came into any court of law. There is a coarse axiom, not without some truth, that possession is nine points of the law. We have possession. What is even more important, we have the hostile instrument in our possession."

"You mean that unfortunate, and unjust deed, of a bygone time, that was so wickedly concealed? Dishonest transaction, from first to last!"

"Madam, the law is not to blame for that; nor even the lawyers; but the clients, who kept changing them. But for that, your admirable father must have known that the will, he dictated to me, was waste paper. At least as regards the main part of these demesnes."

"What monstrous injustice! A positive premium upon filial depravity. You regard things professionally, I suppose. But surely, it must have struck you as a flagrant dishonesty, a base and wicked crime, that a document so vile should be allowed even to exist."

Miss Yordas had spoken with unusual heat; and the lawyer looked at her, with an air of mild inquiry. Was it possible that she suggested to him the destruction of the wicked instrument? Ladies had done queer things, within his knowledge—but this lady showed herself too cautious for that.

"I know what my father would have done in such a case," she continued, with her tranquil smile recovered; "he would just have ridden up to his solicitor's office, demanded the implement of robbery, brought it home, and set it upon the hall-fire, in the presence of the whole of his family, and household. But now, we live in such a strictly lawful age, that no crime can be stopped, if only perpetrated legally. And you say that Mr. More—something, 'Moresharp,' I think it was, knows of that iniquitous production?"

"Madam, we cannot be certain; but I have reason to suspect, that Mr. Mordacks has got wind of that unfortunate deed of appointment."

"Supposing that he has, and that he means to use his knowledge, he cannot force

the document from your possession, can he?"

"Not without an order. But by filing affidavit, after issue of writ in ejectment, they may compel us to produce, and allow attested copy to be taken."

"Then the law is disgraceful, to the last degree; and it is useless to own anything. That deed is in your charge, as our attorney, I suppose, sir."

"By no other right, madam; we have twelve chestfuls; any one, or all of which, I am bound to render up to your order."

"Our confidence in you is unshaken. But without shaking it, we might order home any particular chest, for inspection?"

"Most certainly, madam, by giving us receipt for it. For antiquarian uses, and others, such a thing is by no means irregular. And the oldest of all the deeds are in that box—charters from the Crown, grants from Corporations, records of assay by arms—warrants that even I cannot decipher."

"A very learned gentleman is likely soon to visit us. A man of modern family, who spends his whole time in seeking out the stories of the older ones. No family in Yorkshire is comparable to ours, in the interest of its annals."

"That is a truth beyond all denial, madam. The character of your ancient race has always been a marked one."

"And always honourable, Mr. Jellicorse. Undeviating principle has distinguished all my ancestors. Nothing has ever been allowed to stand between them and their view of right."

"You could not have put it more clearly, Mistress Yordas. Their own view of right has been their guiding star throughout. And they never have failed to act accordingly."

"Alas! of how very few others can we say it! But being of a very good old family yourself, you are able to appreciate such conduct. You would like me perhaps to sign the order for that box of ancient—cartularies, is not that the proper word for them? And it might be as well to state, why they happen to be wanted—for purposes of family history."

"Madam, I will at once prepare a memorandum, for your signature, and your sister's."

The mind of Mr. Jellicorse was much relieved; although the relief was not untempered with misgivings. He sat down immediately at an ancient writing-table, and prepared a short order for delivery, to their trusty servant Jordas, of a certain box, with the letter C. upon it, and containing title-deeds of Scargate-Hall estate.

"I think it might be simpler not to put it so precisely," my Lady Philippa suggested; "but merely to say a box containing the oldest of the title-deeds, as required for an impending antiquarian research."

Mr. Jellicorse made the amendment; and then, with the prudence of long practice, added, "the order should be in your handwriting, madam; will it give you too much trouble just to copy it?" "How can it signify, if it bears our signatures?" his client asked, with a smile at such a trifle; however she sat down, and copied it upon another sheet of paper. Then Mr. Jellicorse, beautifully bowing, drew near to take possession of his own handwriting; but the lady, with a bow of even greater elegance, lifted the cover of the standing desk, and therein placed both manuscripts; and the lawyer perceived that he could say nothing.

"How delightful it is to be quit of business!" The hostess now looked hospitable. "We need not recur to this matter, I do hope. That paper, whatever it is, will be signed by both of us, and handed over to you, in your legal head-quarters, to-morrow. We must have the pleasure of sending you home in the morning, Mr. Jellicorse. We have bought a very wonderful vehicle, invented for such roads as ours, and to supersede the jumping car. It is warranted to traverse any place a horse can travel, with luxurious ease to the passengers, and safety of no common description. Jordas will drive you; your horse can trot behind; and you can send back by it whatever there may be."

Mr. Jellicorse detested new inventions, and

objected most strongly to any experiment made in his own body. However, he would rather die, than plead his time of life in bar; and his faith in the dog-man was unlimited. And now, the gentle Mrs. Carnaby, who had gracefully taken flight from "horrid business," returned in an evening dress, and with a sweetly smiling countenance; and very nearly turned the Jellicorsian head, snowy as it was, with soft attentions, and delicious deference.

"I was treated like a prince," he said, next day, when delivered safe at home, and resting among his rather dingy household gods. "There never could have been a more absurd idea, than that notion of yours, about my being put into wet sheets, Diana. Why I even had my nightcap warmed; and a young woman came, with a blush upon her face, and a question, whether I would be pleased to sleep in a gross of Naples stockings! Ah, to my mind, after all, it proves what I have always said—that there is nothing like old blood!"

"Nothing like old blood for being made a fool of," his wife replied, with a coarseness which made him shiver, after Mrs. Carnaby; "they know what they are about, I'll lay a penny. Some roguery, no doubt, that they seek to lead you into. That is what their nightcaps, and stockings, mean. How low it is, to make a foreground of them!"

"Hush, my dear! I cannot bear such want of charity. And what is even worse—you expose me to an action-at-law, with heavy damages."

The lawyer had sundry little qualms of conscience, which were deepened by his wife's sagacious words; and suddenly it struck him that the new-fangled vehicle, which had brought him home so quietly from Scargate, had shown a strange inability to stand still, for more than two minutes, at his side-door. So much had he been hurried, by the apparent straits of his charioteer, that he ran out with box C., without ever stopping to make an inventory of its contents—as he intended to do—or even looking whether the all-important deed was there. In fact, he had scarcely time to seal up the key in a separate package, hand it to Jordas, and take the order (now become a receipt) from the horny fist of the dog-mane before Marmaduke, rendered more dashing by snow-drift, was away like a thunderbolt; if such a thing there be, and if it has four legs.

"How could I have helped doing as I have done?" he whispered to himself uncomfortably. "Here are two ladies, of high position, and they send a joint order for their property. By-the-bye, I will just have a look at that order, now that there is no horse to jump over me." Upon going to the day-file, he found the order right, transcribed from his

own amended copy, and bearing two signatures, as it should do. But it struck him that the words "Eliza Carnaby" were written too boldly for that lady's hand; and the more he looked at them, the more he was convinced of it. That was no concern of his; for it was not his duty, under the circumstances of the case, to verify her signature. But this conviction drove him to an uncomfortable conclusion—"Miss Yordas intends to destroy that deed, without her sister's knowledge. She knows that her sister's nerve is weaker; and she does not like to involve her in the job. A very brave, sisterly feeling, no doubt; and much the wiser course, if she means to do it. It is a bold stroke, and well worthy of a Yordas. But I hope, with all my heart, that she never can have thought of it. And she kept that order in my handwriting, to make it look as if the suggestion came from me! And I am as innocent, as any lamb is of the frauds that shall come to be written on his skin. The duty of attorney towards client prevents me from opening my lips upon the matter. But she is a deep woman, and a bold one too. May the Lord direct things aright! I shall retire, and let Robert have the practice, as soon as Brown's bankruptcy has worn out captious creditors. It is the Lord alone, that doeth all things well."

Mr. Jellicorse knew that he had done his best;

and though doubtful of the turn which things had taken, with some exclusion of his agency, he felt (though his conscience told him not to feel it) that here was one true source of joy. That impudent, dashing, unprofessional man, who was always poking his vile, unarticled nose into legal business, that fellow of the name of Mordacks, now would have no *locus standi* left. At least a hundred and fifty firms, of good standing in the county, detested that man; and even a Judge would import a *scintillula juris*, into any measure which relieved the country of him. Meditating thus, he heard a knock.

CHAPTER XV.

STAND AND DELIVER.

THE day was not far worn as yet; and May month having come at last, the day could stand a good deal of wear. With Jordas burning to exhibit the wonders of the new machine (which had been bought upon his advice) and with Marmaduke conscious of the new gloss on his coat, all previous times had been beaten—as the sporting writers put it—that is to say, all previous times of the journey from Scargate to Middleton, for any man who sat on wheels. A rider would take a shorter cut, and have many other advantages; but for a driver, the time had been the quickest upon record.

Mr. Jellicorse, exulting in his safety, had imprinted the chaste salute upon his good wife's cheek, at ten minutes after one o'clock; when the clerks in the office with laudable promptitude (not expecting him as yet) had unanimously cast down pen, and betaken hand and foot, towards knife and fork. Instead of

blaming them, this good lawyer went upon that same road himself; with the great advantage, that the road to his dinner lay through his own kitchen. At dinner-time, he had much to tell, and many large helps to receive, of interest and of admiration, especially from his pet child Emily (who forgot herself so largely, as to lick her spoon while gazing), and after dinner, he was not without reasons for letting perhaps a little of the time slip by. Therefore, by the time he had described all dangers, discharged his duty to all comforts, and held the little confidential talk with his wife, and himself, above recorded, the clock had made its way to half-past three.

Mrs. Jellicorse, and Emily, were gone forth to pay visits; the clerks, shut away in their own room, were busy, scratching up a lovely case for *nisi prius;* the cook had thrown the sifted cinders on the kitchen-fire, and was gone with the maids, to exchange just a few constitutional words with the gardener; and the whole house was drowsy with that by-time, when light and shadow seem to mix together, and far-away sounds take a faint to-and-fro, as if they were the pendulum of silence.

"That is Emily's knock. Impatient child! Come back for her mother's gloves, or something. All the people are out; I must go and let her in."

With these words, and a little placid frown, —because a soft nap was impending on his

eyelids, and yet they were always glad to open on his favourite—the worthy lawyer rose, and took a pinch of snuff, to rouse himself; but before he could get to the door, a louder, and more impatient rap, almost made him jump.

"What a hurry you are in, my dear! You really should try to learn some little patience."

While he was speaking, he opened the door; and behold, there was no little girl, but a tall and stately gentleman, in horseman's dress, and of strong commanding aspect!

"What is your pleasure, sir?" the lawyer asked, while his heart began to flutter; for exactly such a visitor had caused him scare of his life, when stronger, by a quarter of a century, than now.

"My pleasure, or rather my business, is with Mr. Jellicorse, the lawyer."

"Then, sir, you have come to the right man for it. My name is Jellicorse, and greatly at your service. Allow me the honour of inviting you within."

"My name is Yordas, Sir Duncan Yordas," said the stranger, when seated in the lawyer's private room; "my father, Philip Yordas, was a client of yours, and of other legal gentlemen, before he came to you. Upon the day of his death, in the year 1777, you prepared his will; which you have since found to be of no effect, except as regards his personal

estate, and about one-eighth part of the realty. Of the bulk of the land, including Scargate Hall, he could not dispose; for the simple reason that they had been strictly entailed by a deed, executed by my grandfather, and his wife, in 1751. Under that entail, I take in fee; for it could not have been barred without me, and I never concurred in any disentailing deed, and my father never knew that such was needful.'

"Excuse me, Sir Duncan, but you seem to be wonderfully apt with the terms of our profession."

"I could scarcely be otherwise, after all that I have had to do with law, in India: Our first object is to apply our own laws, and our second to spread our religion. But no more of that—do you admit the truth of a matter, so stated that you cannot fail to grasp it?"

Sir Duncan Yordas, as he put this question, fixed large, unwavering, and piercing eyes (against which no spectacles were any shelter) upon the mild, amiable, and (generally speaking) very honest orbs of sight, which had lighted the path of the elder gentleman, to good repute and competence. But who may turn a lawyer's hand, from the heaven-sped legal plough?

"Am I to understand, Sir Duncan Yordas, that your visit to me is of an amicable nature, and intended (without prejudice to other

interests) to ascertain, so far as may be compatible with professional rules, how far my clients are acquainted with documents, alleged, or imagined, to be in existence; and how far their conduct might be guided by desire to afford every reasonable facility?"—

"You are to understand simply this—that as the proper owner of Scargate Hall, and the main part of the estates held with it, I require you to sign a memorandum, that you hold all the title-deeds on my behalf; and to deliver at once to me that entailing instrument of 1751, under which I make my claim."

"You speak, sir, as if you had already brought your action, and entered verdict. Legal process may be dispensed with in barbarous countries, but not here. The title-deeds, and other papers, of Scargate Hall were placed in my custody, neither by you, nor on your behalf, sir. I hold them on behalf of those at present in possession; and until I receive due instructions from them, or a final order from a court of law, I should be guilty of a breach of trust, if I parted with a dog's ear of them."

"You distinctly refuse my requirements; and defy me to enforce them."

"Not so, Sir Duncan. I do nothing more than declare what my view of my duty is, and decline in any way to depart from it."

"Upon that score I have nothing more to say. I did not expect you to give up the

deeds, though in 'barbarous countries,' as you call them, we have peremptory ways. I will say more than that, Mr. Jellicorse; I will say, that I respect you, for clinging to what you must know, better than anybody else, to be the weaker side."

The lawyer bowed his very best bow; but was bound to enter protest, against the calm assumption of the claimant.

"Let us leave that question," Sir Duncan said; "the time would fail us, to discuss that now. But one thing I surely may insist upon, as the proper heir of my grandfather. I may desire you to produce, for my inspection, that deed in pursuance of his marriage-settlement, which has for so many years lain concealed."

"With pleasure I will do so, Sir Duncan Yordas (presuming that any such deed exists) upon the production of an order from the Court, either of King's Bench, or of Common Pleas."

"In that case, you would be obliged to produce it, and would earn no thanks of mine. But I ask you to lay aside the legal aspect; for no action is pending, and perhaps never will be. I ask you, as a valued adviser of the family, and a trustworthy friend to its interests—as a gentleman in fact, rather than a mere lawyer, to do a wise, and amicable thing. You cannot in any way injure your case, if a law-case is to come of it; because

we know all about the deed already. We even have an abstract of it, as clear as you yourself could make; and we have discovered that one of the witnesses is still alive. I have come to you myself, in preference to employing a lawyer; because I hope, if you meet me frankly, to put things in train for a friendly, and fair settlement. I am not a young man; I have been disappointed of any one to succeed me, and I wish to settle my affairs in this country, and return to India; which suits me better, and where I am more useful. My sisters have not behaved kindly to me; but that I must try to forgive, and forget. I have thought matters over, and am quite prepared to offer very liberal terms —in short, to leave them in possession of Scargate; upon certain conditions, and in a certain manner."

"Really, Sir Duncan," Mr. Jellicorse exclaimed; "allow me to offer you a pinch of snuff. You are pleased with it? Yes, it is of quite superior quality. It saved the life of a most admirable fellow, a henchman of your family—in fact, poor Jordas. The power of this snuff alone supported him from freezing—"

"At another time, I may be highly interested in that matter," the visitor replied, without meaning to be rude, but knowing that the man of law was making passes to gain time; "just at present, I must ask you

to say yes, or no. If you wish me to set my offer plainly before you, and so relieve the property of the cost of a hopeless struggle—for I have taken the opinion of the first real-property Counsel of the age—you will, as a token of good faith, and of common sense, produce for my inspection that deed-poll, of November 15th, 1751."

Poor Mr. Jellicorse was desperately driven. He looked round the room, to seek for any interruption. He went to the window, and pretended to see another visitor knocking at the door. But no help came; he must face it out himself; and Sir Duncan, with his quiet resolution, looked more stern than his violent father.

"I think that before we proceed any further," said the lawyer, at last sitting down, and taking up a pen, and trying what the nib was like, "we really should understand a little, where we are already. My own desire to avoid litigation is very strong; almost unprofessionally so; though the first thing consulted by all of us naturally is the pocket of our client—"

"Whether it will hold out, I suppose;" Sir Duncan Yordas departed from his dignity in saying this; and was sorry as soon as he had said it.

"That is the vulgar impression about us; which it is our duty to disdain. But without losing time upon that question, let me ask,

what shall I put down as your proposition, sir?"

"There is nothing to put down. That is just the point. I do not come here, with any formal proposition. If that had been my object, I would have brought a lawyer. What I say is, that I have the right to see that deed. It forms no part of my sisters' title-deeds, but even destroys their title. It belongs to me, it is my property; and only through fraud, is it now in your hands. Of course we can easily wrest it from you, and must do so, if you defy me. It rests with you, to take that risk. But I prefer to cut things short. I pledge myself to two things —first to leave the document in your possession; and next to offer fair, and even handsome terms, when you have met me thus fairly. Why should you object? For we know all about it. Never mind how."

Those last three words decided the issue. Even worse than the fear of breach of trust, was the fear of treason in the office; and the lawyer's only chance of getting clue to that, was to keep on terms with this Sir Duncan Yordas. There had been no treason whatever in the office; neither had anything come out through the proctorial firm in York, or Sir Walter Carnaby's solicitors; but a note among long-headed Duncombe's papers had got into the hands of Mordacks. Of that however Mr. Jellicorse had no idea.

"Sir Duncan Yordas, I will meet you as you come," he said, with his good fresh-coloured face as honest as the sun, when the clouds roll off; "it is an unusual step on my part, and perhaps irregular. But rather than destroy the prospect of a friendly compromise, I will strain a point, and candidly admit that there is an instrument open to an interpretation, which might, or might not, be in your favour."

"That I knew long ago, and more than that. My demand is—to see it, and to satisfy myself."

"Under the circumstances, I am half inclined to think, that I should be disposed to allow you that privilege, if the document were in my possession."

"Now, Mr. Jellicorse," Sir Duncan answered, showing his temper in his eyes alone; "how much longer will you trifle with me? Where is that deed?"

Mr. Jellicorse drew forth his watch, took off his spectacles, and dusted them carefully with a soft yellow handkerchief; then restored them to their double sphere of usefulness, and perused, with some diligence, the time of day. By the law which compels a man to sneeze, when another man sets the example, Sir Duncan also drew forth his watch.

"I am trying to make my reply as accurate," said the lawyer, beginning to enjoy the position as a man, though not quite as a

lawyer, "as accurate, as your candour, and confidence, really deserve, Sir Duncan. The box, containing that document, to which you attach so much importance (whether duly, or otherwise, is not for me to say, until Counsel's opinion has been taken on our side) considering the powers of the horse, that box should be about Stormy Gap, by this time. A quarter to four by me. What does your watch say, sir?"

"The deed has been sent for, post-haste, has it? And you know for what purpose?"

"You must draw a distinction between the deed, and the box containing it, Sir Duncan. Or, to put it more accurately, betwixt that deed, and its casual accompaniments. It happens to be among very old charters, which happen to be wanted, for certain excellent antiquarian purposes. Such things are not in my line, I must confess, although so deeply interesting. But a very learned man seems to have expressed—"

"Rubbish. Excuse me; but you are most provoking. You know, as well as I do, that robbery is intended; and you allow yourself to be made a party to it."

This was the simple truth; and the lawyer, being (by some strange inversion of professional excellence) honest at the bottom, was deeply pained at having such words used as, to, for, about, or, in anywise, concerning him.

"I think, Sir Duncan, that you will be sorry," he answered with much dignity, "for employing such language, where it cannot be resented. Your father was a violent man; and we all expect violence of your family."

"There is no time to go into that question now. If I have wronged you, I will beg your pardon. A very few hours will prove how that is. How, and by whom, have you sent the box?"

Mr. Jellicorse answered, rather stiffly, that his clients had sent a trusty servant, with a light vehicle to fetch the box; and that now he must be half-way towards home.

"I shall overtake him," said Sir Duncan with a smile; "I have a good horse, and I know the short cuts. Hoofs without wheels go a yard to a foot, upon such rocky collar-work."

Without another word, except, "Good-bye," Sir Duncan Yordas left the house, walked rapidly to the inn, and cut short the dinner his good horse was standing up to. In a very few minutes, he was on Tees bridge, with his face towards the home of his ancestors.

It may be supposed that neither his thoughts, nor those of the lawyer, were very cheerful. Mr. Jellicorse was deeply anxious, as to the conflict which must ensue, and as to the figure his fair fame might cut; if this strange transaction should be exposed, and calumniated by evil tongues. In these elderly days, and with all experience, he had

laid himself open,—not legally perhaps, but morally, to the heavy charge of connivance at a felonious act, and even some contribution towards it. He told himself vainly, that he could not help it; that the documents were in his charge, only until he was ordered to give them up; and that it was no concern of his, to anticipate what might become of them. His position had truly been difficult; but still, he might have escaped from it with clearer conscience. His duty was to cast away drawing-room manners, and warn Miss Yordas, that the document she hated so, was not her own to deal with, but belonged (in equity at least) to those who were entitled under it; and that to take advantage of her wrongful possession, and destroy the foe, was a crime; and, more than that, a shabby one. The former point might not have stopped her; but the latter would have done so, without fail; for her pride was equal to her daring. But poor Mr. Jellicorse had felt the power of a will more resolute than his own, and of grand surroundings, and exalted style; and his desire to please had confused, and thereby overcome his perception of the right. But now these reflections were all too late; and the weary brain found comfort only in the shelter of its nightcap.

If a little slip had brought a very good man to unhappiness, how much harder was it for Sir Duncan Yordas, who had com-

mitted no offence at all! No Yordas had ever cared a tittle for tattle—to use their own expression—but deeper mischief than tattle must ensue, unless great luck prevented it. The brother knew well, that his sister inherited much of the reckless self-will, which had made the name almost a by-word; and which had been master of his own life, until large experience of the world, and the sense of responsible power curbed it. He had little affection for that sister left—for she had used him cruelly, and even now was embittering the injury—but he still had some tender feeling for the other, who had always been his favourite. And though cut off, by his father's act, from due headship of the family, he was deeply grieved, in this more enlightened age, to expose their uncivilized turbulence.

Therefore, he spurred his willing horse against the hill, and up the many-winding ruggedness of road; hoping, at every turn, to descry, in the distance, the vehicle carrying that very plaguesome box. If his son had been there, he might have told him on the ridge of Stormy Gap (which commanded high and low, rough and smooth, dark and light, for miles ahead,) that Jordas was taking the final turn, by the furthest gleam of the water-mist, whence the stone-road laboured up to Scargate. But Sir Duncan's eyes,—though as keen as an eagle's while young—

had now seen too much of the sun, to make out that grey atom, gliding in the sunset haze.

Upon the whole, it was a lucky thing, that he could not overtake the car; for Jordas would never have yielded his trust, while any life was in him; and Sir Duncan having no knowledge of him, except as a boy of all work about the place, might have been tempted to use the sword, without which no horseman then rode there. Or failing that, a struggle between two equally resolute men must have followed, with none at hand to part them.

When the horseman came to the foot of the long steep pull, leading up to the stronghold of his race, he just caught a glimpse of the car turning in, at the entrance of the courtyard. "They have half an hour's start of me," he thought, as he drew up behind a rock, that the house might not descry him; "if I ride up in full view, I hurry the mischief. Philippa will welcome me, with the embers of my title. She must not suspect that the matter is so urgent. Nobody shall know that I am coming. For many reasons, I had better try the private road below the Scarfe."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SCARFE.

JORDAS, without suspicion of pursuit, had allowed no grass to grow under the feet of Marmaduke, on the homeward way. His orders were, to use all speed; to do as he had done at the lawyer's private door; and then without baiting his horse to drive back, reserving the nose-bag for some very humpy halting-place. There is no such man, at the present time of day, to carry out strict orders, as the dogman was; and the chance of there ever being such an one again diminishes by very rapid process. Marmaduke, as a horse, was of equal quality, reasoning not about his orders, but about the way to do them.

There was no special emergency now, so far as my lady Philippa knew; but the manner of her mind was, to leave no space between a resolution and its execution. This is the way to go up in the world, or else to go down abruptly; and to her the latter would have been far better, than to halt between two opinions. Her plan had been

shaped, and set, last night; and, like all great ideas was the simplest of the simple. And Jordas, who had inklings of his own, though never admitted to confidence, knew how to carry out the outer part.

"When the turbot comes," she said to Welldrum; as soon as her long sight showed her the trusty Jordas, beginning the home-ascent; "it is to be taken first out of the car, and to my sister's sitting-room; the other things Jordas will see to. I may be going for a little walk. But you will at once carry up the turbot; Mrs. Carnaby's appetite is delicate."

The butler had his own opinion upon that interesting subject. But in her presence it must be his own. Any attempt at enlargement of her mind, by exchange of sentiment—such as Mrs. Carnaby permitted, and enjoyed—would have sent him flying down the hill, pursued by square-toed men prepared to add elasticity to velocity. Therefore, Welldrum made a leg, in silence, and retreated; while his mistress prepared for her intended exploit. She had her beaver hat, and mantle, ready by the shrubbery door—as a little quiet postern of her own was called—and in the heavy standing-desk, or "secretary" of her private room, she had stored a flat basket, or frail, of stout flags, with a heavy clock-weight inside it.

"Much better to drown the wretched thing, than burn it," she had been saying to herself; "especially at this time of year,

when fires are weak, and tell-tale. And parchment makes such a nasty smell; Eliza might come in, and suspect it. But the Scarfe is a trusty confidant."

Mistress Yordas, while sure that her sister (having even more than herself at stake) would approve, and even applaud her scheme, was equally sure that it must be kept from her, both for its own sake, and for hers. And the sooner it was done, the less the chance of disturbing poor Eliza's mind.

The Scarfe is a deep pool, supposed to have no bottom (except perhaps in the very bowels of the earth), upon one of the wildest headwaters of the Tees. A strong mountain-torrent, from a desolate ravine, springs forth with great ferocity, and sooner than put up with any more stabs from the rugged earth, casts itself on air. For a hundred and twenty feet, the water is bright, in the novelty, and the power of itself, striking out freaks of eccentric flashes, and even little sun-bows, in fine weather. But the triumph is brief; and a heavy retribution, created by its violence, awaits below. From the tossing turmoil of the fall, two white volumes roll away, with a clash of waves between them, and sweeping round the craggy basin meet (like a snowy wreath) below, and rush back, in coiling eddies, flaked with foam. All the middle is dark deep water, looking on the watch for something to suck down.

What better duty, or more pious, could a hole like this perform, than that of swallowing up a lawyer; or, if no such morsel offered, then at least a lawyer's deeds? Many a sheep had been there engulfed, and never saluted by her lambs again; and although a lawyer by no means is a sheep (except in his clothing, and his eyes perhaps) yet his doings appear upon the skin thereof, and enhance its value more than drugs of Tyre. And it is to be feared, that some fleeced clients will not feel the horror which they ought to feel, at the mode pursued by Mistress Yordas, in the delivery of her act and deed.

She came down the dell, from the private grounds of Scargate, with a resolute face, and a step of strength. The clock-weight, that should know time no more, was well embosomed in the old deed-poll, and all stitched firmly in the tough brown frail, whose handles would help for a long strong cast. Towering crags, and a ridge of jagged scaurs, shut out the sunset; while a thicket of dwarf oak, and the never-absent bramble, aproned the yellow dugs of shale with brown. In the middle, was the caldron of the torrent, called the "Scarfe;" with the sheer trap-rock, which is green in the sunlight, like black night brooding over it; while a snowy wreath of mist (like foam exhaling) circled round the basined steep, or hovered over above the chasm.

Miss Yordas had very stanch nerves; but

still, for reasons of her own, she disliked this place, and never came near it for pleasure's sake; although in dry summers, when the springs were low, the fury of the scene passed into grandeur, and even beauty. But a Yordas (long ago gone to answer for it) had flung a man, who plagued him with the law, into this hole. And what was more disheartening, although of less importance, a favourite maid of this lady, upon the exile of her sweetheart, hearing that his feet were upside down to hers, and that this hole went right through the earth, had jumped into it, in a lonely moment; instead of taking lessons in geography. Philippa Yordas was as brave as need be; but now her heart began to creep, as coldly as the shadows crept.

For now, she was out of sight of home, and out of hearing of any sound, except the roaring of the force. The Hall was half a mile away, behind a shoulder of thick-ribbed hill; and it took no sight of this torrent, until it became a quiet river, by the downward road. "I must be getting old," Miss Yordas thought; "or else this path is much rougher than it used to be. Why, it seems to be getting quite dangerous! It is too bad of Jordas, not to see to things better. My father used to ride this way sometimes. But how could a horse get along here now?"

There used to be a bridle-road, from the grounds of Scargate, to a ford below the

force, and northward thence towards the Tees; or by keeping down stream, and then fording it again, a rider might hit upon the Middleton road, near the rock that warned the public of the bloodhounds. This bridle-road kept a safe distance from the cliffs overhanging the perilous Scarfe; and the only way down to a view of the fall, was a scrambling track, over rocks and trunks, unworthy to be called a footpath. The lady with the bag had no choice left, but to follow this track, or else abandon her intention. For a moment, she was sorry that she had not been satisfied with some less troublesome destruction of her foe, even at the risk of chance suspicions. But, having thus begun it, she would not turn back, and be angry with her idle fears, when she came to think of them.

With hereditary scorn of second thoughts, she cast away doubt, and went down the steep, and stood on the brow of sheer rock; to recover her breath, and strength for a long, bold cast. The crag beneath her feet was trembling with the power of the flood below; and the white mist from the deep moved slowly, shrouding now, and now revealing, the black gulf, and its slippery walls. For the last few months, Miss Yordas had taken very little exercise, and seldom tasted the open air; therefore the tumult, and terror of the place, in the fading of the sky, and

darkening of the earth, got hold of her more than they should have done.

With the frail in her right hand, poised upon three fingers (for the fourth had been broken in her childhood), she planted the sole of her left foot on the brink, and swung herself for the needful cast.

A strong throw was needful, to reach the black water, that never gave up anything; if the bag were dropped in the foaming race, it might be carried back to the heel of the fall. She was proud of her bodily strength, which was almost equal to that of a muscular man; and her long arm swelled with the vigour of the throw. But just when the weight should have been delivered, and flown with a hiss into the bottomless abyss, a loose flag of the handle twisted on her broken finger. Instead of being freed, the bag fell back, struck her in the chest, and threw her back; for the clock weight was a heavy one. Her balance was lost, her feet flew up, she fell upon her back, and the smooth beaver cloak began sliding upon the slippery rock. Horrible death was pulling at her; not a stick, nor a stone was in reach of her hands, and the pitiless crags echoed one long shriek, above all the roar of the waterfall. She strove to turn over, and grasp the ground, but only felt herself going faster. Her bright boots were flashing against the white mist—a picture in her mind for ever—her body was

following, inch by inch. With elbow, and shoulder, and even hair-combs, she strove to prolong the descent into death; but the descent increased its speed, and the sky itself was sliding.

Just when the balance was inclining downwards, and the plunge hanging on a hair's breadth, powerful hands fell upon her shoulders; a grating of a drag against the grain was the last thing she was conscious of; and Sir Duncan Yordas, having made a strong pull, at the imminent risk of his life, threw back his weight on the heels of his boots, and they helped him. His long Indian spurs, which had no rowel, held their hold like a falcon's hind talon; and he drew back the lady, without knowing who she was, having leaped from his horse at her despairing scream. From his knowledge of the place, he concluded that it was some person seeking suicide, but recoiling from the sight of death; and without another thought, he risked his life to save.

Breathless himself—for the transit of years, and of curry-powder, had not improved his lungs—he laboured at the helpless form, and laid it at last in a place of safety.

"What a weight the lady is!" was his first idea; "it cannot be want of food that has driven her; nor of money either; her cloak would fetch a thousand rupees on the hills. And a bag full of something—

precious also, to judge by the way she clings to it. Poor thing! Can I get any water for her? There used to be a spring here, where the woodcocks came. Is it safe to leave her? Certainly not, with her head like that; she might even have apoplexy. Allow me, madam. I will not steal it. It is only for a cushion."

The lady, however, though still in a stupor, kept her fingers clenched upon the handle of the bag; and without using violence he could not move them. Then the stitching of the frail gave way; and Sir Duncan espied a roll of parchment. Suddenly, the lady opened large dark eyes, which wandered a little, and then (as he raised her head) met his, and turned away.

"Philippa!" he said, and she faintly answered "Yes," being humbled and shaken by her deadly terror, and scarcely sure of safety yet; for the roar, and the chasm, were in sight and hearing still.

"Philippa, are you better? Never mind what you were thinking of. All shall be right about that, Philippa. What is land in comparison with life? Look up at me. Don't be afraid to look. Surely you know your only brother! I am Duncan, who ran away, and has lived for years in India. I used to be very kind to you, when we were children; and why should I alter from it now? I remember when you tumbled in the path down

there, and your knee was bleeding, and I tied it up, with a dock-leaf and my handkerchief. Can you remember? It was primrose-time."

"To be sure I do," she said, looking up with cheerfulness; "and you carried me all the way home almost; and Eliza was dreadfully jealous."

"That she always was; and you not much better. But now we are getting on in life, and we need not have much to do with one another. Still we may try not to kill one another, by trumpery squabbles about property. Stay where you are, for a moment, sister; and you shall see the end of that."

Sir Duncan took the bag, with the deed inside it, returned in three steps to the perilous shelf, and with one strong hurl sent forth the load; which cleft the white mist, and sank for ever, in the waves of the whirlpool.

"No one can prosecute me for that," he said, returning with a smile; "though Mordacks may be much aggrieved. Now, Philippa, although I cannot carry you well, from the additions time has made to you, I can help you home, my dear; and then on, upon my business."

The pride, and self-esteem, of Miss Yordas had never been so crushed before. She put both hands upon her brother's shoulders, and burst into a flood of tears.

CHAPTER XVII.

BUTS REBUTTED.

Sir Duncan Yordas was a man of impulse; as almost every man must be, who sways the wills of other men. But he had not acted upon mere impulse, in casting away his claim to Scargate. He knew that he could never live in that bleak spot, after all his years in India; he disliked the place, through his father's harshness; he did not care that any son of his, who had lain under charge of a foul crime, and fled, instead of meeting it, should become a "Yordas of Scargate Hall," although that description by no means involved any very strict equity of conduct. And besides these reasons, he had another, which will appear very shortly. But whatever the secondary motives were, it was a large and generous act.

When Mrs. Carnaby saw her brother, she was sure that he was come to turn her out, and went through a series of states of mind, natural to an adoring mother, with a frail

imagination of an appetite—as she poetically described it. She was not very swift of apprehension, although so promptly alive to anything tender, refined, and succulent. Having too strong a sense of duty, to be guilty of any generosity, she could not believe, either then or thereafter, that her brother had cast away anything at all, except a mere shred of a lawsuit. And without any heed of chronology—because (as she justly inquired) what two clocks are alike?—she was certain that if he did anything at all, to drive off those horrible lawyers from the house, there was no credit due to any one but Pet. It was the noble way Pet looked at him!

Pet, being introduced to his uncle, after dinner, when he came home from fishing, certainly did look nobly at him, if a long stare is noble. Then he went up to him, with a large and liberal sniff, and an affable inquiry, as a little dog goes up to a big one. Sir Duncan was amused, having heard already some little particulars about this youth; whose nature he was able to enter into, as none but a Yordas could rightly do. However, he was bound to make the best of him, and did so; discovering not only room for improvement, but some hope of that room being occupied.

"The boy has been shockingly spoiled," he said to his sister Philippa that evening;

"also he is dreadfully ignorant. None of us are very great at scholarship, and never have much occasion for it. But things are becoming very different now. Everybody is beginning to be expected to know everything. Very likely, as soon as I am no more wanted, I shall be voted a blockhead. Luckily the wars keep people from being too choice, when their pick goes every minute. And this may stop the fuss, that comes from Scotland mainly, about universal distribution—or some big words—of education. 'Pet,' as you call him, is a very clever fellow, with much more shape of words about him, than ever I was blest with. In spelling, I saw that he was my master; and so I tried him with geography, and all he knew of India was, that it takes its name from India-rubber!"

"Now I call that clever of him," said Miss Yordas; "for I really might have forgotten even that. But the fatal defect in his education has been the want of what you grow, chiefly in West India perhaps—the cane, Duncan, the sugar-cane! I have read all about it, you can tell me nothing. You suck it, you smoke it, and you beat your children with it."

"Well," said Sir Duncan, who was not quite sure, in the face of such authority, "I disremember; but perhaps they do in some parts, because the country is so large. But it is not the ignorance of Pet I care for—

such a fault is natural, and unavoidable; and who is there to pick holes in it? The boy knows a great deal more than I did at his age, because he is so much younger. But, Philippa, unless you do something with him, he will never be a gentleman."

"Duncan, you are hard. You have seen so much."

"The more we see, the softer we become. The one thing we harden against is lying—the seed, the root, and the substance of all vileness. I am sorry to say, your Pet is a liar."

"He does not always tell the truth, I know. But bear in mind, Duncan, that his mother did not insist—and in fact she does not herself always—"

"I know it; I am grieved that it should come from our side. I never cared for his father much, because he went against me; but this I will say for him, Lance Carnaby would sooner cut his tongue out, than put it to a lie. When I am at home, my dealings are with fellows who could not speak the truth, if they tried for dear life; simply through want of practice. They are like your lower class of horse-dealers; but with infinitely more intelligence. It is late to teach poor Pet the first of all lessons; and for me to stop to do it, is impossible. But will you try to save further disgrace, to a scapegrace family, but not a mean one?"

"I feel it as much as you do; perhaps more," Miss Yordas answered, forgetting altogether about the deed-box, and her antiquary. "You need not tell me how very sad it is. But how can it be cured? His mother is his mother. She never would part with him; and her health is delicate."

"Stronger than either yours, or mine; unless she takes too much nourishment. Philippa, her will is mere petulance. For her own good, we must set it aside. And if you agree with me, it can be done. He must go into a marching regiment at once, ordered abroad, with five shillings in his pocket, earn his pay, and live upon it. This patched-up peace will never last six months. The war must be fought out, till France goes down, or England. I can get him a commission; and I know the colonel—a man of my own sort, who sees things done, instead of talking. It would be the making of Lancelot. He has plenty of courage, but it has been milched. At Oxford, or Cambridge, he would do no good, but simply be ruined by having his own way. Under my friend, Colonel Thacker, he will have a hard time of it, and tell no lies."

Thus it was settled. There was a fearful outcry, hysterics of an elegant order, and weepings enough to produce summer spate in the Tees. But the only result was the ordering of the tailor, the hosier, the boot-maker, and the scissors-grinder, to put a new

edge upon Squire Philip's razors, that Pet might practise shaving. "Cold-blooded cruelty, savage homicide; cannibalism itself is kinder," said poor Mrs. Carnaby, when she saw the razors; but Pet insisted upon having them, made lather, and practised with the backs; till he began to understand them.

"He promises well; I have great hopes of him," Sir Duncan said to himself; "he has pride; and no proud boy can be long a liar. I will go, and consult my dear old friend Bart."

Mr. Bart, who was still of good bodily strength, but becoming less resolute in mind than of yore, was delighted to see his old friend again; and these two men, having warm, proud hearts, preserved each other from self-contempt, by looking away, through the long hand-clasp. For each of them was, to the other, almost the only man really respected in the world.

Betwixt them, such a thing as concealment could not be. The difference in their present position was a thing to laugh at. Sir Duncan, looked up to Bart, as being the maker of his character; and Bart admired Sir Duncan, as a newer, and wiser edition of himself. They despatched the past in a cheery talk; for the face of each was enough to show, that it might have been troublous—as all past is—but had slidden into quiet satisfaction now, and a gentle flow of experience.

Then they began to speak of present matters, and the residue of time before them; and among other things, Sir Duncan Yordas spoke of his nephew Lancelot.

"Lancelot Yordas Carnaby," said Bart, with the smile of a greybeard at young love's dream, "has done us the honour to fall in love, for ever and ever, with our little Insie. And the worst of it is, that she likes him."

"What an excellent idea!" his old friend answered; "I was sure there was something of that sort going on. Now betwixt love and war, we shall make a man of Pet."

As shortly as possible, he told Mr. Bart what his plan about his nephew was, and how he had carried it against maternal, and now must carry it against maiden love. If Lancelot had any good stuff in him, any vertebrate embryo of honesty—to be put among men, and upon his mettle (with a guardian angel in the distance of sweet home), would stablish all the man in him, and stint the beast. Mr. Bart, though he hated hard fighting, admitted that for weak people it was needful; and was only too happy so to cut the knot of his own home entanglements, with the ruthless sword. For a man of liberal education, and much experience in spending money, who can put a new bottom to his own saucepan, is not the one to feel any despair of his fellow-creatures mending.

Then arose the question, who should bell

the cat; or rather, who should lead the cat to the belling. Pet must be taken, under strong duresse, to the altar—as his poor mother said, and shrieked—whereat he was to shed his darling blood. His heart was in his mouth, when his uniform came; and he gave his sacred honour to fly, straight as an arrow, to the port where his regiment was getting into boats; but Sir Duncan shook his grizzled head. "Somebody must see him into it," he said; "not a lady; no, no, my dear Eliza. I cannot go myself; but it must be a man of rigidity, a stern agent. Oh, I know! how stupid of me!"

"You mean poor dear Mr. Jellicorse," suggested Mrs. Carnaby, with a short, hot sob. "But, Duncan, he has not the heart for it. For anything honest, and loyal, and good, kind people may trust him with their lives. But to tyranny, rapine, and manslaughter, he never could lend his fine honourable face."

"I mean a man of a very different cast—a man, who knows what time is worth, a man who is going to be married on a Sunday, that he may not lose the day. He has to take three days' holiday, because the lady is an heiress; otherwise he might get off with one. But he hopes to be at work again, on Wednesday; and we will have him here post-haste from York, on Thursday. It will be the very job to suit him—a gentleman of

Roman ancestry, and of the name of Mordacks."

"My heart was broken already; and now I can feel the poor pieces flying into my brain. Oh, why did I ever have a babe, for monsters of the name of Mordacks to devour?"

Mordacks was only too glad to come. On the very day after their union, Calpurnia (likewise of Roman descent) had exhibited symptoms of a strong will of her own.

Mordacks had temporized, during their courtship; but now she was his, and must learn the great fact. He behaved very well, and made no attempt at reasoning (which would have been a fatal course), but promptly donned cloak, boots, and spurs, while his horse was being saddled; and then set off, with his eyes fixed firmly upon business. A crow could scarcely make less than fifty miles from York to Scargate, and the factor's trusty roadster had to make up his mind to seventy. So great, however, is sometimes the centrifugal force of Hymen, that upon the third day, Mr. Mordacks was there, vigorous, vehement, and fit for any business.

When he heard what it was, it liked him well; for he bore a fine grudge against Lancelot, for setting the dogs at him three years ago, when he came (as an agent for adjoining property) to the house of Yordas; and when Mr. Jellicorse scorned to meet an illegal meddler with legal matters. If Mordacks

had any fault—and he must have had some, in spite of his resolute conviction to the contrary—it was that he did not altogether scorn revenge.

Lives there man, or even woman, capable of describing now the miseries, the hardships, the afflictions beyond groaning, which, like electric hail, came down upon the sacred head of Pet? He was in the grasp of three strong men—his uncle, Mr. Bart, worst of all, that Mordacks—escape was impossible, lamentation met with laughter, and passion led to punishment. Even stern Maunder was sorry for him, although he despised him for feeling it. The only beam of light, the only spark of pleasure, was his royal uniform; and to know that Insie's laugh thereat was hollow, and would melt away to weeping when he was out of sight, together with the sulky curiosity of Maunder, kept him up a little, in this time of bitter sacrifice.

Enough that he went off, at last, in the claws of that Roman hippogriff—as Mrs. Carnaby savagely called poor Mordacks—and the visitor's flag hung half-mast high, and Saracen, and the other dogs, made a howling dirge, with such fine hearts (as the poor mother said, between her sobs) that they got their dinners upon China plates.

Sir Duncan had left, before this, and was back under Dr. Upround's hospitable roof. He had made up his mind to put his fortune,

or rather his own value, to the test, in a place of deep interest to him now, the heart of the fair Janetta. He knew that, according to popular view, he was much too old for this young lady; but for popular view he cared not one doit, if her own had the courage and the will to go against it. For years he had sternly resisted all temptation of second marriage; towards which shrewd mothers, and nice maidens, had laboured in vain to lead him. But the bitter disappointment about his son, and that long illness, and the tender nursing (added to the tenderness of his own sides, from lying upon them, with a hard dry cough) had opened some parts of his constitution to matrimonial propensities. Miss Upround was of a playful nature, and teased everybody she cared about; and although Sir Duncan was a great hero to her, she treated him sometimes, as if he were her doll. Being a grave man, he liked this, within the bounds of good taste and manners; and the young lady always knew where to stop. From being amused with her, he began to like her; and from liking her, he went on to miss her; and from missing her, to wanting her, was no long step.

However, Sir Duncan was not at all inclined to make a fool of himself herein. He liked the lady very much, and saw that she would suit him, and help him well in the life to which he was thinking of returning. For

within the last fortnight, a very high post, at Calcutta, had been offered to him, by the powers in Leadenhall Street, upon condition of sailing at once, and foregoing the residue of his leave. If matters had been to his liking in England, he certainly would have declined it; but after his sad disappointment, and the serious blow to his health, he resolved to accept it, and set forth speedily. The time was an interlude of the war, and ships need not wait for convoy.

This had induced him to take his Yorkshire affairs (which Mordacks had been forced to intermit, during his Derbyshire campaign) into his own hands, and speed the issue, as above related. And part of his plan was to quit all claim to present possession of Scargate; that if the young lady should accept his suit, it might not, in any way, be for the sake of the landed interest. As it happened, he had gone much further than this, and cast away his claim entirely; to save his sister from disgrace, and the family property from lawyers. And now having sought Dr. Upround's leave (which used to be thought the proper thing to do), he asked Janetta whether she would have him; and she said, "No, but he might have her." Upon this, he begged permission to set the many drawbacks before her; and she nodded her head, and told him to begin.

"I am of a Yorkshire family. But, I am

sorry to say that their temper is bad; and they must have their own way too much."

"But, that suits me; and I understand it. Because I must have my own way too."

"But, I have parted with my inheritance, and have no place in this country now."

"But, I am very glad of that. Because I shall be able to go about."

"But, India is a dreadfully hot country; many creatures tease you; and you get tired of almost everything."

"But, that will make it all the more refreshing, not to be tired of you, perhaps."

"But, I have a son, as old as you, or older."

"But, you scarcely suppose that I can help that!"

"But, my hair is growing grey, and I have great crow's-feet, and everybody will begin to say—"

"But, I don't believe a word of it, and I won't have it; and I don't care a pin's head, what all the world says put together, so long as you don't belong to it."

CHAPTER XVIII.

TRUE LOVE.

About a month after Sir Duncan's marriage, when he and his bride were in London, with the lady's parents come to help, in the misery of outfit, a little boy ran through a field of wheat, early in the afternoon, and hid himself in a blackthorn hedge, to see what was going on at Anerley. Nothing escaped him, for his eyes were sharp, being of true Danish breed. He saw Captain Anerley trudging up the hill, with a pipe in his mouth, to the bean-field, where three or four men were enjoying the air, without any of the greedy gulps produced by too great exertion of the muscles; then he saw the mistress of the house throw wide a lattice, and shake out a cloth for the birds, who skipped down from the thatch by the dozen instantly; and then he saw Mary with a basket, and a wooden measure, going round the corner of the house, and clucking, for the fowls to rally from their scratching-places. These came zealously, with speed of leg and

wing, from straw-rick, threshing-floor, double-hedge, or mixen; and following their tails, the boy slipped through the rick-yard, and tossed a note to Mary, with a truly Flamburian delivery.

Although it was only a small-sized boy, no other than the heir of the "Cod-fish," a brighter rose flew into Mary's cheeks than the master-cock of all the yard could show, upon comb, or wattle. Contemptuous of twopence, which Mary felt for, the boy disappeared like a rabbit; and the fowls came, and helped themselves to the tail-wheat, while their mistress was thinking of her letter. It was short and sweet—at least in promise—being no more than these few words—"Darling, the dyke where first we met, an hour after sunset."

Mary never doubted that her duty was to go; and at the time appointed, she was there, with firm knowledge of her own mind, being now a loving and reasonable woman. It was just a year since she had saved the life of Robin; and patience, and loneliness, and opposition, had enlarged, and ennobled her true and simple heart. No lord in the land need have looked for a purer, or sweeter example of maidenhood, than this daughter of a Yorkshire farmer was, in her simple dress, and with the dignity of love. The glen was beginning to bestrew itself with want of light, instead of shadows; and bushy places thickened, with the imperceptible growth of

night. Mary went on, with excitement deepening, while sunset deepened into dusk; and the colour of her clear face flushed, and fleeted, under the anxious touch of love; as the tint of a delicate finger-nail, with any pressure, varies. But not very long, was she left in doubt.

"How long you have been! And, oh, where have you been? And how much longer will you be?" Among many other words, and doings, she insisted chiefly on these points.

"I am a true-blue, as you may see, and a warrant-officer already," he said, with his old way of smiling at himself; "when the war begins again (as it must—please God!—before many weeks are over) I shall very soon get my commission, and go up. I am quite fit already to command a frigate."

Mary was astonished at his modesty; she thought that he ought to be an admiral at least, and so she told him; however, he knew better.

"You must bear in mind," he replied, with a kindly desire to spare her feelings, "that until a change for the better comes, I am under disadvantages. Not only as an outlaw—which has been upon the whole a comfort—but as a suspected criminal, with warrant against him, and reward upon him. Of course I am innocent; and everybody knows it, or at least I hope so—except the one, who should have known it best."

"I am the person who should know it best of all," his true love answered, with some jealousy; "explain yourself, Robin, if you please."

"No Robin, so please you; but Mr. James Blyth, captain of the fore-top, then coxswain of the barge, and now master's mate of H.M. ship of the line, 'Belleisle.' But the one who should have trusted me, next to my own love, is my father, Sir Duncan Yordas."

"How you are talking! You have such a reckless way. A warrant officer, an arrant criminal! And your father, Sir Duncan Yordas, that very strange gentleman, who could never get warm! Oh, Robin, you always did talk nonsense, when—whenever I would let you. But you should not try to make my head go round."

"Every word of it is true," the young sailor answered, applying a prompt remedy for vertigo; "it had been clearly proved to his knowledge, long before the great fact was vouchsafed to me, that I am the only son of Sir Duncan Yordas, or, at any rate, his only son for the present. The discovery gratified him so little, that he took speedy measures to supplant me."

"The very rich gentleman from India," said Mary, "that married Miss Uproud lately; and her dress was all made of spun diamonds, they say, as bright as the dew in the morning.

Oh, then you will have to give me up; Robin, you must give up me!"

Clasping her hands, she looked up at him with courage, keeping down all sign of tears. She felt that her heart would not hold out long; and yet she was prouder than to turn away. "Speak," she said; "it is better to speak plainly; you know that it must be so."

"Do I? why?" Robin Lyth asked calmly, being well contented to prolong her doubts; that he might get the benefit thereafter.

"Because you belong to great people; and I am just a farmer's daughter, and no more; and quite satisfied to remain so. Such things never answer."

"A little while ago, you were above me; weren't you? When I was nobody's son, and only a castaway, with a nickname."

"That has nothing to do with it. We must take things exactly as we find them, at the time."

"And you took me, as you found me at the time; only that you made me out so much better. Mary, I am not worthy of you. What has birth to do with it? And so far as that goes, yours is better; though mine may seem the brighter. In every other way, you are above me. You are good, and I am wicked. You are pure, and I am careless. You are sweet, and I am violent. In truth alone, can I ever vie with you; and I must be a pitiful scoundrel, Mary, if I did not even

try to do that; after all that you have done for me."

"But," said Mary, with her lovely eyes gleaming with the glittering shade of tears; "I like you very much to do it—but not exactly as a duty, Robin."

"You look at me like that, and you talk of duty! Duty, duty—this is my duty; I should like to be discharging it, for ever and a day."

"I did not come here for ideas of this kind," said Mary, with her lips as red as pyracanthine berries; "free-trade was bad enough; but the Royal Navy worse, it seems. Now, Robin dear, be sensible; and tell me what I am to do."

"To listen to me; and then say, whether I deserve what my father has done to me. He came back from India—as you must understand—with no other object in life, that I can hear of (for he had any quantity of money) than to find out me, his only child, and the child of the only wife he ever could put up with. For twenty years he had believed me to be drowned; when the ship he sent me home in, to be educated, was supposed to have foundered with all hands. But something made him fancy, that I might have escaped; and as he could not leave India then, he employed a gentleman of York, named Mordacks, to hunt out all about it. Mordacks, who seems to be a wonderful

man, and most kindhearted to everybody, as poor Widow Carroway says of him, with tears, and as he testifies of himself—he set to work, and found out in no time, all about me, and my ear-rings, and my crawling from the cave, that will bear my name, they say; and more things than I have time to tell. He appointed a meeting with Sir Duncan Yordas, here at Flamborough, and would have brought me to him; and everything might have been quite happy. But in the meanwhile, that horrible murder of poor Carroway came to pass; and I was obliged to go into hiding; as no one knows better than you, my dear. My father (as I suppose I must call him), being bound, as it seems that they all are, to fall out with their children, took a hasty turn against me at once. Mordacks, whom I saw last week, trusting myself to his honour, tells me that Sir Duncan would not have cared twopence, about my free-trade work, and so on; or even about my having killed the officer in fair conflict, for he is used to that. But he never will forgive me for absconding, and leaving my fellows, as he puts it, to bear the brunt. He says that I am a dastard, and a skulk, and unworthy to bear the name of Yordas."

"What a wicked, unnatural man he must be!" cried Mary; "he deserves to have no children."

"No; I am told that he is a very good man, but stiff-necked, and disdainful. He regards me with scorn, because he knows no better. He may know our laws, but he knows nothing of our ways, to suppose that my men were in any danger. If I had been caught while the stir was on, a gibbet on the cliff would have been set up, even before my trial—such is the reward of eminence—but no Yorkshire jury would turn round in the box, with those poor fellows before them. 'Not guilty, my lord,' was on their tongues, before he had finished charging them."

"Oh, I am so glad! They have been acquitted, and you were there to see it!"

"To be sure. I was in the Court, as Harry Ombler's father. Mr. Mordacks got it up; and it told on the jury, even more than could have been expected. Even the Judge wiped his eyes, as he looked at me, for they say he has a scapegrace son; and Harry was the only one of all the six in danger, according to the turn of the evidence. My poor eyes have scarcely come round yet, from the quantity of sobbing that I had to do, and the horrible glare of my goggles. And then I had a crutch that I stumped with, as I sighed, so that all the Court could hear me; and whenever I did it, all the women sighed too, and even the hardest hearts were moved. Mr. Mordacks says that it was capital."

"Oh, but Robin, how shocking; though you make me laugh! If the verdict had been otherwise—oh, what then?"

"Well, then, Harry Ombler had a paper in his hand, done in printing letters by myself, because he is a very tidy scholar, and signed by me; the which he was to read, before receiving sentence, saying that Robin Lyth himself was in York town, and would surrender to that Court, upon condition that mercy should be warranted to the prisoners."

"And you would have given yourself up? And without consulting me about it!"

"Bad, I admit," Robin answered with a smile; "but not half so bad as to give up you—which you calmly proposed just now, dear heart. However, there is no need for any trouble now, except that I am forced to keep out of sight, until other evidence is procured. Mordacks has taken to me, like a better father, mainly from his paramount love of justice, and of daring gallantry, as he calls it."

"So it was, and ten times more; heroic self-devotion is a much more proper term."

"Now don't," said Robin; "if you make me blush, you may guess what I shall do to hide it—carry the war into the sweet land of the enemy. But truly, my darling, there was very little danger. And I am up for a much better joke this time. My august Roman father, who has cast me off, sails as a very

great Indian gun, in a ship of the line, from Spithead, early in September. The "Belleisle" is being paid off now, and I have my certificate; as well as lots of money. Next to his lass, every sailor loves a spree; and mine instead of emptying, shall fill the locker. With this disgusting peace on, and no chance of prize-money, and plenty in their pockets for a good spell ashore, blue-jackets will be scarce, when Sir Duncan Yordas sails. If I can get a decent berth, as a petty officer, off I go for Calcutta, and watch (like the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft) for the safety of my dear papa, and mamma, as the Frenchmen are teaching us to call them. What do you think of such filial devotion?"

"It would be a great deal more than he deserves," Mary answered, with sweet simplicity; "but what could you do, if he found out who you are?"

"Not the smallest fear of that, my dear. I have never had the honour of an introduction. My new step-mother, who might have been my sweetheart, if I had not seen somebody a hundred times as good, a thousand times as gentle, and a million times as lovely—"

"Oh, Robin, do leave off such very dreadful stories! I saw her in the church; and she looked beautiful."

"Fine feathers make fine birds. However, she is well enough in her way; and I

love her father. But for all that, she has no business to be my step-mother; and of course it was only the money that did it. She has a little temper of her own, I can assure you; and I wish Sir Duncan joy of her, when they get among musquitoes. But, as I was going to say, the only risk of my being caught is from her sharp eyes. Even of that, there is not much danger; for we common sailors need not go within hail of those grandees, unless it comes to boat-work. And even if Miss Janetta—I beg her pardon, Lady Yordas, should chance to recognize me, I am sure she would never tell her husband. No, no, she would be too jealous; and for fifty other reasons. She is very cunning—let me tell you."

"Well," cried Mary, with a smile of wisdom; "I hope that I may never live to be a step-mother. The way those poor things get abused—"

"You would have more principle, I should hope, than to marry anybody after me. However, I have told you nearly all my news; and in a few minutes I must be off. Only two things more. In the first place, Mordacks has taken a very great fancy to me, and has turned against my father. He, and Widow Carroway, and I, had a long talk after the trial; and we all agreed, that the murder was committed by a villain called 'John Cadman,' a sneak, and a skulk,

whom I knew well, as one of Carroway's own men. Among other things, they chanced to say that Cadman's gun was missing, and that the poor widow can swear to it. I asked if any one had searched for it; and Mordacks said no, it would be hopeless. I told them that, if I were only free to show myself, and choose my time, I would lay my life upon finding it, if thrown away (as it most likely was) in some part of that unlucky cave. Mordacks caught at this idea, and asked me a number of questions, and took down my answers; for no one else knows the cave, as I do. I would run all risks myself, and be there to do it, if time suited. But only certain tides will serve, even with the best of weather; and there may be no such tide for months—I mean, tide, weather, and clear water combined, as they must be for the job. Therefore I am not to wait, but go about my other business, and leave this to Mordacks, who loves to be captain of everything. Mr. Mordacks talked of a diving-bell, and some great American inventions; but nothing of the kind can be used there, nor even grappling irons. The thing must not be heard of even, until it has been accomplished. Whatever is done, must be done by a man who can swim, and dive, as I can; and who knows the place almost as well. I have told him where to find the man, when the opportunity comes for it; and I have shown my better

father, Robin Cockscroft, the likely spot. So now I have nothing more to do with that."

"How wonderfully you can throw off cares!" his sweetheart answered softly; "but I shall be miserable, till I know what happens. Will they let me be there? Because I understand so much about tides, and I can hold my tongue."

"That you have shown right well, my Mary; but your own sense will tell you, that you could not be there. Now one thing more—here is a ring not worthy—although it is the real stuff—to go upon your precious hand; yet allow me to put it on—no, not there, upon your wedding finger. Now do you know what that is for?"

"For me, I suppose," she answered, blushing with pleasure and admiration; "but it is too good, too beautiful, too costly."

"Not half good enough. Though, to tell you the truth, it cannot be matched easily; any more than you can. But I know where to get those things. Now promise me to wear it, when you think of me; and the one habit will confirm the other. But the more important part is this, and the last thing for me to say to you. Your father still hates my name, I fear. Tell him every word I have told you; and perhaps it will bring him half-way round. Sooner, or later, he must come round; and the only way to do it, is

to work him slowly. When he sees in how many ways I have been wronged, and how beautifully I have borne it all, he will begin to say to himself—'Now this young man may be improving.' But he never will say, 'He hath no need of it.'"

"I should rather think not, you conceited Robin; or whatever else I am to call you now. But I bargain for one thing—whatever may happen, I shall never call you anything else but Robin. It suits you, and you look well with it. Yordas indeed, or whatever it may be—"

"No bargain is valid without a seal—" &c., &c. In the old, but ever vivid way, they went on, until they were forced to part, at the very lips of the house itself, after longing lingerings. The air of the fields was sweet with summer fragrance, and the breath of night: the world was ripe with soft repose, whose dreams were hope and happiness; and the heaven spread some gentle stars, to show mankind the way to it. Then a noble perfume strewed the ambient air with stronger presence; as the farmer, in his shirt-sleeves, came, with a long clay pipe, and grumbled, "Wherever is our Mary, all this time?"

CHAPTER XIX.

NICHOLAS, THE FISH.

FIVE hundred years ago there was a great Italian swimmer, even greater than our Captain Webb; inasmuch as he had, what the wags of the age unjustly ascribe to our hero, that is to say web-toes, and fingers. This capable man could, if history be true, not only swim for a week, without ceasing (reassuring solid nature, now and then, by a gulp of live fish), but also could expand his chest so considerably, that it held enough air for a day's consumption. Fortified thus, he explored Charybdis, and all the Liparic whirlpools, and could have found Cadman's gun anywhere, if it had only been there. But at last the sea had its revenge upon him, through the cruel insistence of his king.

No man so amphibious has since arisen, through the unfathomed tide of time. But a swimmer, and diver of great repute, was now living not far from Teesmouth. That is to say, he lived there, whenever the state

of the weather, or the time of year, stranded him in dry misery. Those, who have never come across a man of this description, might suppose that he was happy, and content at home, with his wife, and growing family, assuaging the brine in the delightful manner commended by Hero to Leander. But, alas, it was not so at all. The temper of the man was very slow to move, as generally happens with deep-chested men; and a little girl might lead him with her finger on the shore; and he liked to try to smell land-flowers, which in his opinion were but weeds. But if a man cannot control his heart, in the very middle of his system, how can he hope to command his skin, that unscientific frontier of his frame?

"Nicholas the fish," as his neighbours (whenever, by coming ashore, he had such treasures) contemptuously called him, was endowed from his birth with a peculiar skin, and by exercise had improved it. Its virtue was excessive thickness—such as a writer should pray for—protected also by powerful hairiness, largely admired by those with whom it is restricted to the head.

Unhappily for Nicholas, the peremptory poises of nature struck a line with him; and this was his line of flotation. From perpetual usage, this was drawn, obliquely indeed, but as definitely as it is upon a ship of uniform displacement, a yacht for instance,

or a man of war. Below that line, scarcely anything could hurt him; but above it he was most sensitive, unless he were continually wetted; and the flies, and the gnats, and many other plagues of England, with one accord pitched upon him, and pitched into him, during his short dry intervals, with a bracing sense of saline draught. Also the sun, and the wind, and even the moon, took advantage of him, when unwetted.

This made his dry periods a purgatory to him; and no sooner did he hear from Mr. Mordacks of a promising job under water, than he drew breath enough for a ten-fathom dive, and bursting from long despair, made a great slap at the flies beneath his collar-bone. The sound was like a drum which two men strike; and his wife, who was devoted to him, hastened home from the adjoining parish, with a sad presentiment of parting. And this was speedily verified; for the champion swimmer, and diver, set forth that very day for Bempton Warren, where he was to have a private meeting with the general factor.

Now it was a great mistake to think—as many people at this time did, both in Yorkshire, and Derbyshire—that the gulf of connubial cares had swallowed the great Roman hero, Mordacks. Unarmed, and even without his gallant roadster to support him, he had leaped into that Curtian lake, and had fought a good fight at the bottom of it. The

details are highly interesting, and the chronicle might be useful; but alas there is no space left for it. It is enough, and a great thing too, to say that he emerged triumphant, reduced his wife into very good condition, and obtained the due mastery of her estates, and lordship of the household.

Refreshed, and recruited by the home campaign, and having now a double base for future operations—York city, with the fosse of Ouse in the east, and Pretorian Hill, Derbyshire, westward—Mordacks returned, with a smack of lip more dry than amontillado-dissimo, to the strict embrace of business. So far as the needs of the body were concerned, he might have done handsomely without any business; but having no flesh fit to weigh against his mind, he gave preference to the latter. Now the essence of his nature was to take strong views; not hastily—if he could help it—nor through narrow aspect of prejudice, but with power of insight (right, or wrong) and stern fixity thereafter. He had kept his opinion, about Sir Duncan Yordas, much longer than usual pending, being struck with the fame of the man, and his manner, and generous impulsive nature. All these he still admired, but felt that the mind was far too hasty; and to put it in his own strong way, that Sir Duncan (whatever he might be in India) had been but a fool in England. Why had he cast away his claim

on Scargate, and foiled the factor's own pet scheme for a great triumph over the lawyers? And why condemn his only son, when found with such skill and at heavy expense, without even hearing both sides of the tale? Last but not least, what induced him to marry, when amply old enough to know better, a girl, who might be well enough in her way, but had no family estate to bring, was shrewdly suspected of a cutting tongue, and had more than once been anything but polite to Geoffrey Mordacks?

Although this gentleman was not a lawyer, and indeed bore a tyrannous hate against that gentle, and most precious class, he shared the solicitor's just abhorrence of the word "farewell," when addressed to him by any one of good substance. He resolved that his attentions should not cease, though undervalued for the moment, but should be continued to the son and heir—whose remainder in tail subsisted still, though it might be hard to substantiate—and when his cousin Lancelot should come into possession, he might find a certain factor to grapple him. Mr. Mordacks hated Lancelot, and had carried out his banishment with intense enjoyment, holding him, as in a wrench-hammer, all the way, silencing his squeaks, with another turn of screw, and as eager to crack him, as if he were a nut, the first that turns auburn in September.

This being the condition of so powerful a mind, facts very speedily shaped themselves thereto; as they do, when the power of an eminent orator lays hold of them, and crushes them, and they cannot even squeak. Or even as a still more eminent 'Bus-driver, when the street is blocked, and there seems to be no room for his own thumb, yet (with a gentle whistle, and a wink), solves the jostling stir, and bulk, makes obstructive traffic slide, like an eddy obsequious, beside him, and behind, and comes forth as the first of an orderly procession, towards the public-house of his true love.

Now if anything, beyond his own convictions, were wanted, to set this great agent upon action, soon it was found in York Summer assizes, and the sudden inrush of evidence, which—no matter how a case has been prepared—gets pent up always for the Bar, and Bench. Then Robin Lyth came, with a gallant dash, and offered himself as a sacrifice, if needful; which proved both his courage, and his common sense in waiting, till due occasion demanded him. Mordacks was charmed with this young man, not only for proving his own judgment right, but also for possessing a quickness of decision, akin to his own, and having smack of illegality.

With vigour, thus renewed by many interests and motives, the general and generous factor kept his appointment, in Bempton Warren.

Since the distressing, but upon the whole desirable, decease of that poor Rickon Goold, the lonely hut, in which he breathed his last, had not been by any means a popular resort. There were said to be things, heard, seen, and felt, even in the brightest summer-day, which commended the spot to the creatures that fear mankind, but like their spectres. The very last of all to approach it now would have been the two rollicking tars, who had trodden their wooden-legged watch around it. Nicholas the fish was superstitious also, as it behoved him well to be; but having heard nothing of the story of the place, and perceiving no gnats in the neighbourhood, he thankfully took it for his short dry spells.

Mr. Mordacks met him, and the two men were deeply impressed with one another. The diver admired the sharp, terse style, and definite expression of the factor; while the factor enjoyed the large ponderous roll, and suggestive reservations of the diver. For this was a man who had met great beings, and faced mighty wonders in deep places; and he thought of them more than he liked to say, because he had to get his living.

Nothing could be settled to a nicety between them, not even as to pounds, shillings, and pence. For the nature of the job depended wholly upon the behaviour of the weather; and the weather must be not only at its best, but also sitting meekly in the

right direction, at the right moment of big Spring-tide. The diver was afraid that he might ask too little; and the factor disliked the risk of offering too much, and possibly spoiling thereby a noble nature. But each of them realized (to some extent) the honesty of the other; and neither of them meant to be unreasonable.

"Give and take, is what I say," said the short man, with the monstrous chest, looking up at the tall man, with the Roman nose; "live and let live. Ah, that's it!"

Mr. Mordacks would have said "Right you are," if that elegant expression had been in vogue; but as that brilliance had not yet risen, he was content to say, "Just so." Then he added, "Here you have everything you want. Madam Precious will send you twice a day, to the stone at the bottom of the lane, a gallon of beer, and victuals in proportion. Your duty is to watch the tides, and weather, keep your boat going, and let me know; and here I am, in half an hour."

Calpurnia Mordacks was in her duty now, and took her autumn holiday at Flamborough. And though Widow Precious felt her heart go pit-a-pat, at first sight of another Mrs. Mordacks, she made up her mind, with a gulp, not to let this cash go to the Thornwick. As a woman she sighed; but as a landlady she smiled, and had visions of hoisting a flag on her roof.

When Mordacks, like a victorious general, conqueror of this Danish town, went forth for his evening stroll to see his subjects, and be saluted, a handsome young sailor came up from the cliffs, and begged to have a few quiet words with him. "Say on, my lad; all my words are quiet," replied the general factor. Then this young man up, and told his tale, which was all in the well-trodden track of mankind. He had run away to sea, full of glorious dreams—valour, adventure, heroism, rivers of Paradise, and lands of heaven. Instead of that, he had been hit upon the head, and in places of deeper tenderness, frequently roasted, and frozen yet more often, basted with brine when he had no skin left, scorched with thirst, and devoured by creatures, whose appetites grew dainty, when his own was ravening.

"Excellent youth," Mr. Mordacks said; "your tale might move a heart of flint. All who know me have but one opinion. I am benevolence itself. But my balance is low at my bankers."

"I want no money, sir," the sailor answered, simply offering benevolence itself a pipeful of tobacco, from an ancient bit of bladder; "I have not got a farthing; but I am with good people, who never would take it, if I had it; and that makes everything square between us. I might have a hatful of money, if I chose; but I find myself better

without it, and my constitution braces up. If I only chose to walk a league sou-west, there would be bonfires burning! But I vowed I would go home, a captain; and I will."

"Ha!" cried Mr. Mordacks with his usual quickness, and now knowing all about everybody, "you are Mr. John Anerley, the son of the famous Captain Anerley."

"Jack Anerley, sir, till better times; and better they never will be, till I make them. But not a word to any one about me, if you please. It would break my mother's heart (for she doth look down upon people, without asking), to hear that Robin Cockscroft was supporting of me. But bless you, I shall pay him soon, a penny for a guinea."

Truth, which struggles, through the throng of men, to get out, and have a little breath sometimes, now and then succeeds, by accident, or the stupid misplacement of a word. A penny for a guinea, was as much as Robin Cockscroft was likely ever to see, for his outlay upon this very fine young fellow. Jack Anerley accepted the situation, with the large philosophy of a sailor; and all he wanted from Mr. Mordacks, was leave to be present at the diving job. This he obtained, as he promised to be useful, and a fourth oar was likely to be needed.

It was about an hour before noon of a beautifully soft September day, when little Sam Precious, the same boy that carried

Robin Lyth's note to Mary, came up to Mr. Mordacks with a bit of plaited rushes, the scytale of Nicholas the fish, who was happy enough not to know his alphabet. The factor immediately put on his hat, girded himself with his riding-sword, and pistol-belt, and told his good wife, that business might take him away, for some hours. Then he hastened to Robin Cockscroft's house, after sending the hostler, on his own horse, with a letter to Bridlington coast-guard station, as he had arranged with poor Carroway's successor.

The Flamborough fishermen were out at sea; and without any fuss, Robin's boat was launched, and manned by that veteran himself, together with old Joe and Bob, who had long been chewing the quid of expectation, and at the bow oar, Jack Anerley. Their orders were to slip quietly round, and wait in the Dovecot, till the diver came. Mordacks saw them on their way; and then he strode up the deserted path, and struck away towards a northern cove, where the diver's little boat was housed. There he found Nicholas the fish, spread out in all his glory, like a polypod awash, or a basking turtle, or a well-fed calf of Proteus. Laid on his back, where the wavelets broke, and beaded a silver fringe upon the golden ruff of sand, he gave his body to soft lullaby, and his mind to perfect holiday. His breadth, and the spring of fresh air inside it, kept him gently up and down;

and his calm enjoyment was enriched by the baffled wrath of his enemies. For flies, of innumerable sorts and sizes, held a hopeless buzz above him, being put upon their mettle to get at him, and perishing sweetly in the vain attempt.

With a grunt of reluctance, he awoke to business, swam for his boat, and embarking Mr. Mordacks, pulled him across the placid bay, to the cave where his forces were assembled.

"Let there be no mistake about it," the factor shouted from the Mermaids' shelf, having promised his Calpurnia to keep upon dry land, whenever the water permitted him; "our friend, the great diver, will first ascertain, whether the thing which we seek is here. If so, he will leave it where it is; until the arrival of the Preventive boat. You all understand, that we wish to put the matter, so that even a lawyer cannot pick any hole in the evidence. Light no links until I tell you. Now Nicholas the fish, go down at once."

Without a word, the diver plunged, having taken something between his teeth, which he would not let the others see. The watery floor of the cavern was as smooth as a mill-pond in July, and he plunged so neatly that he made no splash; nothing but a flicker of reflection on the roof, and a lapping murmur round the sides, gave token that a big man

was gone into the deep. For several minutes, no one spoke; but every eye was strained upon the glassy dimness, and every ear intent for the first break of sound.

"T' goop ha' got' un," cried old Robin, indignant at this outrage by a stranger to his caves, "God niver mahd mon to pree intil 's ain warks."

Old Joe, and Bob, grunted approbation; and Mordacks himself was beginning to believe that some dark whirlpool, or coil of tangles, had drowned the poor diver, when a very gentle noise, like a dabchick playing beneath a bridge, came from the darkest corner. Nicholas was there, inhaling air, not in greedy gulps and gasps, like a man who has had no practice, but leisurely encouraging his lungs with little doses; as a doctor gives soup to a starved boat-crew. Being hailed by loud voices, he answered not, for his nature was by no means talkative; but presently, with very little breach of water, he swam to the middle, and asked for his pipe.

"Have you found the gun?" cried Mordacks, whose loftiest feelings had subsided, in a quarter of a minute, to the business level. Nicholas made no reply, until the fire of his pipe was established, while he stood in the water, quite as if he were on land, supporting himself by nothing more than a gentle movement of his feet; while the glow of the touch-paper lit his round face, and yellow

leather skull-cap. "In coorse I has," he said at last, blowing a roll of smoke along the gleaming surface; "over to yon little cornder."

"And you can put your hand upon it in a moment?" The reply was a nod, and another roll of smoke. "Admirable! Now then, Joe, and Bob the son of Joe, do what I told you; while Master Cockscroft, and our nimble young friend, get the links all ready."

The torches were fixed on the rocky shelf, as they had been upon the fatal night; but they were not lit, until Joe and his son, sent forth in the smaller boat to watch, came back with news that the Preventive gig was round the point, and approaching swiftly, with a lady in the stern, whose dress was black.

"Right," cried Mr. Mordacks, with a brisk voice ringing under the ponderous brows of rock, "men, I have brought you to receive a lesson. You shall see what comes of murder. Light the torches. Nicholas, go under, with the exception of your nose, or whatever it is you breathe with. When I lift my hand, go down; and do as I have ordered you."

The cavern was lit with resinous fire, and the dark still water heaved with it, when the coast-guard boat came gliding in. The crew, in white jerseys, looked like ghosts flitting into some magic scene. Only the officer, darkly clad, and standing up with the tiller-

lines in hand, and the figure of a woman sitting in the stern, relieved their spectral whiteness.

"Commander Hardlock, and men of the coast-guard," shouted Mr. Mordacks, when the wash of ripples, and the drip of oars, and the creak of wood, gave silence; "the black crime, committed upon this spot, shall no longer go unpunished. The ocean itself has yielded its dark secret, to the perseverance of mankind, and the humble, but not unskilful efforts, which it has been my privilege to conduct. A good man was slain here, in cold blood slain, a man of remarkable capacity, and zeal, gallantry, discipline, and every noble quality, and the father of a very large family. The villain, who slew him, would have slain six other harmless men by perjury; if an enlightened English jury had been fools enough to believe him. Now, I will show you what to believe. I am not eloquent, I am not a man of words; my motto is strict business. And business with me is a power, not a name. I lift my hand; you wait for half a minute; and then, from the depths of this abyss, arises the gun used in the murder."

The men understood about half of this, being honest fellows in the main, and desiring time to put heads together, about the meaning; but one there was, who knew too well that his treacherous sin had found him out.

He strove to look like the rest, but felt that his eyes obeyed heart more than brain; and then the widow, who had watched him closely through her black veil, lifted it, and fixed her eyes on his. Deadly terror seized him; and he wished that he had shot himself.

"Stand up, men," the commander shouted; "until we see the end of this. The crime has been laid upon our force. We scorn the charge of such treachery. Stand up, men; and face, like innocent men, whatever can be shown against you."

The men stood up, and the light of the torches fell upon their faces. All were pale, with fear and wonder; but one was white as death itself. Calling up his dogged courage, and that bitterness of malice, which had made him do the deed, and never yet repent of it, he stood as firmly as the rest; but differed from them in three things. His face wore a smile; he watched one place only; and his breath made a noise, while theirs was held.

Then, from the water, without a word, or sign of any hand that moved it, a long gun rose before John Cadman, and the butt was offered to his hand. He stood, with his arms at his sides, and could not lift them, to do anything. Neither could he speak, nor make defence; but stood, like an image that is fastened by the feet.

"Hand me that," cried the officer sharply; but instead of obeying, the man stared

malignantly, and then plunged over the gun into the depth.

Not so, however, did he cheat the hangman; Nicholas caught him (as a water-dog catches a worn-out glove), and gave him to any one that would have him. "Strap him tight," the captain cried, and the men found relief in doing it. At the next jail-delivery he was tried, and the jury did their duty. His execution restored goodwill, and revived that faith in justice, which subsists upon so little food.

CHAPTER XX.

IN THE THICK OF IT.

One of the greatest days in all the history of England, having no sense of its future fame, and being upon a hostile coast, was shining rather dismally. And one of England's greatest men, the greatest of all her sons in battle—though few of them have been small at that—was out of his usual mood, and full of calm presentiment, and gloomy joy. He knew that he would see the sun no more; yet his fear was not of that, but only of losing the light of duty. As long as the sun endures, he shall never see duty done more brilliantly.

The wind was dropping, to give the storm of human fury leisure; and while a sullen swell was rolling, canvas flapped, and timbers creaked. Like a team of mallards in double column, plunging and lifting buoyant breasts, to right and left alternately, the British fleet bore down upon the swanlike crescent of the foe. These were doing their best to fly; but

failing of that luck, put helm alee, and shivered in the wind, and made fine speeches, proving that they must win the day.

"For this I have lived, and for this it would be worth my while to die; having no one left, I dare say now, in all the world to care for me."

Thus spake the junior lieutenant of that British ship, the "Victory;" a young man after the heart of Nelson, and gazing now on Nelson's face. No smarter sailor could be found, in all that noble fleet, than this Lieutenant Blyth, who once had been the captain of all smugglers. He had fought his way up by skill, and spirit, and patience, and good temper, and the precious gift of self-reliance, failing of which, all merit fails. He had always thought well of himself; but never destroyed the good of it, by saying so; and whoever praised him, had to do it again, to outspeak his modesty. But, without good fortune, all these merits would never have been successes. One of Robin's truest merits was that he generally earned good luck.

However, his spirits were not in their usual flow of jocundity just now, and his lively face was dashed with care. Not through fear of lead, or steel, or wooden splinter, or a knock upon the head, or any other human mode of encouraging humanity. He hoped to keep out of the way of these, as even the greatest heroes do—for how could the world get on,

if all its bravest men went foremost? His mind meant clearly, and with trust in proper Providence, to remain in its present bodily surroundings; with which it had no fault to find. Grief, however—so far as a man having faith in his luck admits that point—certainly was making some little hole, into a heart of corky fibre. For Robin Lyth had heard last night, when a schooner joined the fleet with letters, that Mary Anerley, at last, was going to marry Harry Tanfield. He told himself, over and over again, that if it were so, the fault was his own, because he had not taken proper care about the safe despatch of letters. Changing from ship to ship, and from sea to sea, for the last two years or more, he had found but few opportunities of writing; and even of those he had not made the utmost. To Mary herself he had never once written, knowing well that her father forbade it; while his letters to Flamborough had been few, and some of those few had miscarried. For the French had a very clever knack, just now, of catching the English despatch-boats; in most of which, they found accounts of their own thrashings, as a listener catches bad news of himself. But none of these led them to improve their conduct.

Flamborough (having felt certain that Robin could never exist without free-trade, and missing many little courtesies that flowed from his liberal administration), was only too ready to

lament his death, without insisting on particulars. Even as a man, who has foretold a very destructive gale of wind, tempers with the pride of truth the sorrow, which he ought to feel for his domestic chimney-pots (as soon as he finds them upon his lawn), so little Denmark, while bewailing, accepted the loss, as a compliment to its own renowned sagacity.

But Robin knew not, until last night, that he was made dead at Flamborough, through the wreck of a ship, which he had quitted, a month before she was cast away. And now, at last, he only heard that news by means of his shipmate, Jack Anerley. Jack was a thorough-going sailor now, easy, and childish, and full of the present, leaving the past to cure, and the future to care for itself, as might be. He had promised Mr. Mordacks, and Robin Cockscroft, to find out Robin Lyth, and tell him all about the conviction of John Cadman; and knowing his name in the navy, and that of his ship, he had done so, after in-and-out chase. But there for the time he had rested from his labours, and left "Davy Jones" to send back word about it; which that Pelagian Davy fails to do, unless the message is enshrined in a bottle, for which he seems to cherish true naval regard.

In this state of things, the two brothers-in-law—as they fully intended to be, by-and-by—were going into this tremendous battle;

Jack as a petty officer, and Robin as a junior lieutenant of Lord Nelson's ship. Already had Jack Anerley begun to feel for Robin—or Lieutenant Blyth as he now was called—that liking of admiration, which his clear free manner, and quickness of resource, and agreeable smile in the teeth of peril, had won for him, before he had the legal right to fight much. And Robin—as he shall still be called, while the memory of Flamborough endures—regarded Jack Anerley with fatherly affection, and hoped to put strength into his character.

However, one necessary step, towards that, is to keep the character surviving; and in the world's pell-mell now beginning, the uproar alone was enough to kill some, and the smoke sufficient to choke the rest. Many a British sailor, who, by the mercy of Providence, survived that day, never could hear a word concerning any other battle (even though a son of his own delivered it down a trumpet) so furious was the concussion of the air, the din of roaring metal, and the clash of cannon-balls, which met in the air, and split up into founts of iron.

No less than seven French, and Spanish ships, agreed with one accord, to fall upon, and destroy Lord Nelson's ship. And if they had only adopted a rational mode of doing it, and shot straight, they could hardly have helped succeeding. Even as it was, they

succeeded far too well. For they managed to make England rue the tidings of her greatest victory.

In the storm, and whirl, and flame of battle, when shot flew as close as the teeth of a hay-rake, and fire blazed into furious eyes, and then with a blow was quenched for ever, and raging men flew into pieces, some of which killed their dearest friends—who was he that could do more than attend to his own business? Nelson had known that it would be so, and had twice enjoined it, in his orders; and when he was carried down to die, his dying mind was still on this. Robin Lyth was close to him when he fell, and helped to bear him to his plank of death; and came back, with orders, not to speak, but work.

Then ensued that crowning effort of misplaced audacity—the attempt to board, and carry by storm, the ship that still was Nelson's. The captain of the "Redoutable" saw, through an alley of light, between walls of smoke, that the quarter-deck of the Victory had plenty of corpses, but scarcely a life upon it. Also he felt (from the comfort to his feet, and the increasing firmness of his spinal column) that the heavy British guns, upon the lower decks, had ceased to throb, and thunder, into his own poor ship. With a bound of high spirits, he leaped to a pleasing conclusion; and shouted, "Forward,

my brave sons! We will take the vessel of war, of that Nielson!"

This however proved to be beyond his power; partly through the inborn absurdity of the thing; and partly, no doubt through the quick perception, and former vocation of Robin Lyth. What would England have said, if her greatest hero had breathed his last, in French arms, and a captive to the Frenchman? Could Nelson himself have departed thus, to a world in which he never could have put the matter straight? The wrong would have been redressed very smartly here; but perhaps outside his knowledge. Even to dream of it awakes a shudder; yet outrages almost as great have triumphed; and nothing is quite beyond the irony of fate.

But if free-trade cannot be shown, as yet, to have won, for our country, any other blessing; it has earned the last atom of our patience, and fortitude, by its indirect benevolence, at this great time. Without free-trade—in its sweeter, and more innocent maidenhood of smuggling—there never could have been on board that English ship the "Victory," a man, unless he were a runagate, with a mind of such laxity, as to understand French. But Robin Lyth caught the French captain's words; and with two bounds, and a holloa, called up Britons from below. By this time, a swarm of brave Frenchmen

was gathered in the mizen-chains and gangways of their ship; waiting for a lift of the sea, to launch them into the English outworks. And scarcely a dozen Englishmen were alive, within hail, to encounter them. Not even an officer, till Robin Lyth returned, was there to take command of them. The foremost, and readiest there, was Jack Anerley, with a boarder's pike, and a brace of ship-pistols, and his fine ruddy face screwed up, as firm as his father's, before a big sale of wheat. "Come on, you froggies; we are ready for you," he shouted, as if he had a hundred men in ambush.

They, for their part, failed to enter into the niceties of his language—which difficulty somehow used never to be felt among classic warriors—yet from his manner and position, they made out, that he offered let and hindrance. To remove him from their course, they began to load guns, or to look about for loaded ones, postponing their advance, until he should cease to interfere; so clear, at that time, was the Gallic perception of an English sailor's fortitude. Seeing this to be so, Jack (whose mind was not well balanced) threw a powder-case amongst them, and exhibited a dance. But this was cut short by a hand-grenade; and, before he had time to recover from that, the deck within a yard of his head flew open, and a stunning crash went by.

Poor Jack Anerley lay quite senseless; while ten or twelve men (who were rushing up, to repel the enemy), fell, and died, in a hurricane of splinters. A heavy round shot, fired up from the enemy's main-deck, had shattered all before it; and Jack might thank the grenade, that he lay on his back, while the havoc swept over. Still, his peril was hot; for a volley of musketry whistled, and rang around him; and at least a hundred and fifty men were watching their time, to leap down on him.

Everything now looked as bad as could be, with the drifting of the smoke, and the flare of fire, and the pelting of bullets, and of grapnel from cohorns, and the screams of Frenchmen exulting vastly, with scarcely any Englishmen to stop them. It seemed as if they were to do as they pleased, level the bulwarks of English rights, and cover themselves with more glory than ever. But while they yet waited, to give one more scream, a very different sound arose. Powder, and metal, and crash of timber, and even French and Spanish throats, at their very highest pressure, were of no avail against the onward vigour and power of an English cheer. This cheer had a very fine effect. Out of their own mouths, the foreigners at once were convicted of inferior stuff; and their two twelve-pounders crammed with grapnel, which ought to have scattered mortality,

banged upwards, as harmless as a pod discharging seed.

In no account of this great conflict, is any precision observed, concerning the pell-mell, and fisticuff parts of it. The worst of it is, that on such occasions, almost everybody, who was there, enlarges his own share of it; and although reflection ought to curb this inclination, it seems to do quite the contrary. This may be the reason, why nobody as yet (except Mary Anerley, and Flamborough folk) seems even to have tried to assign fair importance to Robin Lyth's share in this glorious encounter. It is now too late to strive against the tide of fortuitous clamour, whose deposit is called history. Enough, that this Englishman came up, with fifty more behind him, and carried all before him, as he was bound to do.

CHAPTER XXI.

MARY LYTH.

Conquests, triumphs, and slaughterous glory, are not very nice, till they have ceased to drip. After that extinction of the war upon the waves, the nation, which had won the fight, went into general mourning. Sorrow, as deep as a maiden's is at the death of her lover, spread over the land; and people who had married their romance away, and fathered off their enthusiasm, abandoned themselves to even deeper anguish, at the insecurity of property. So deeply had England's faith been anchored into the tenacity of Nelson. The fall of the funds, when the victory was announced, outspoke a thousand monuments.

From sires, and grandsires, Englishmen have learned the mood into which their country fell. To have fought under Nelson, in his last fight, was a password to the right hands of men, and into the hearts of women. Even a man, who had never been known to change his mind, began to condemn other

people, for being obstinate. Farmer Anerley went to church, in his Fencible accoutrements, with a sash of heavy crape, upon the first day of the Christian year. To prove the largeness of his mind, he harnessed the white-nosed horse, and drove his family away from his own parish, to St. Oswald's church at Flamborough, where Dr. Upround was to preach upon the death of Nelson. This sermon was of the noblest order, eloquent, spirited, theological; and yet so thoroughly practical, that seven Flamborough boys set off, on Monday, to destroy French ships of war. Mary did her very utmost not to cry—for she wanted, so particularly, to watch her father—but nature, and the Doctor, were too many for her. And when he came to speak of the distinguished part played (under Providence) by a gallant son of Flamborough; who, after enduring, with manly silence, evil report, and unprecious balms, stood forward in the breach, like Phineas, and, with the sword of Gideon, defied Philistia to enter the British ark; and when he went on to say, that but for Flamborough's prowess on that day, and the valour of the adjoining parish (which had also supplied a hero), England might be mourning her foremost πρόμαχος, her very greatest fighter in the van, without the consolation of burying him, and embalming him in a nation's tears—for the French might have fired the magazine—and

when he proceeded to ask who it was, that (under the guiding of a gracious hand) had shattered the devices of the enemy—up stood Robin Cockscroft, with a score of equally ancient captains, and remembering where they were, touched their forelocks, and answered, "Robin Lyth, sir!"

Then, Mary permitted the pride of her heart, which had long been painful with the tight control, to escape in a sob, which her mother had foreseen; and pulling out the stopper from her smelling-bottle, Mistress Anerley looked at her husband, as if he were Buonaparte himself. He, though aware that it was inconsistent of her, felt (as he said afterwards) as if he had been a Frenchman; and looked for his hat, and fumbled about for the button of the pew, to get out of it. But luckily the clerk, with great presence of mind, awoke; and believing the sermon to be over, from the number of men who were standing up, pronounced "amen," decisively.

During the whole of the homeward drive, Farmer Anerley's countenance was full of thought; but he knew that it was watched, and he did not choose to let people get in front of him, with his own brains. Therefore, he let his wife and daughter look at him, to their hearts' content; while he looked at the hedges, and the mud, and the ears of his horse, and the weather; and he only made

two observations of moment, one of which was "gee," and the other was "whoa!"

With females jolting up and down, upon no springs—except those of jerksome curiosity, conduct of this character was rude in the extreme. But knowing what he was, they glanced at one another; not meaning in any sort of way to blame him, but only that he would be better by-and-by, and perhaps try to make amends handsomely. And this, beyond any denial, he did, as soon as he had dined, and smoked his pipe on the butt of the tree by the rickyard. Nobody knew where he kept his money; or at least his good wife always said so, when any one made bold to ask her. And even now, he was right-down careful to go to his pot, without anybody watching; so that when he came into the Sunday parlour, there was not one of them who could say, even at a guess, where he last had been.

Master Simon Popplewell, gentleman-tanner (called out of his name, and into the name of "Johnny," even by his own wife, because there was no sign of any Simon in him)—he was there, and his good wife Debby, and Mistress Anerley in her best cap, and Mary, dressed in Royal-navy blue, with bars of black (for Lord Nelson's sake), according to the kind gift of aunt and uncle; also Willie, looking wonderfully handsome, though pale with the failure of "perpetual

motion," and inclined to be languid; as great genius should be, in its intervals of activity. Among them a lively talk was stirring; and the farmer said, "Ah! You was talking about me."

"We mought be; and yet again we mought not," Master Popplewell returned, with a glance at Mrs. Deborah, who had just been describing to the company, how much her husband excelled in jokesomeness; "brother Stephen, a good man seeks to be spoken of; and a bad one objects to it, in vain."

"Very well. You shall have something for your money. Mary, you know where the old Mydeary wine is, that come from your Godfathers and Godmothers, when you was called in baptism. Take you the key from your mother, child, and bring you up a bottle; and brother Popplewell will open it; for such things is beyond me."

"Well done, our side!" exclaimed the tanner; for if he had a weakness, it was for Madeira, which he always declared to have a musky smack of tan; and a waggish customer had told him once, that the grapes it was made of were always tanned first. The others kept silence, foreseeing great events.

Then Mr. Popplewell, poised with calm discretion, and moving with the nice precision of a fine watchmaker, shed into the best decanter (softly as an angel's tears) liquid beauty, not too gaudy, not too spark-

ling with shallow light, not too ruddy with sullen glow, but vivid—like a noble gem, a brown Cairn-gorm—with mellow depth of lustre. "That's your sort!" the tanner cried, after putting his tongue, while his wife looked shocked, to the lip of the empty bottle.

"Such things is beyond my knowledge," answered Farmer Anerley, as soon as he saw the best glasses filled; "but nothing in nature is too good, to speak a good man's health in. Now fill you up a little glass for Mary; and, Perpetual Motion, you stand up; which is more than your machines can do. Now here I stand, and I drink good health to a man as I never clapped eyes on yet, and would have preferred to keep the door between us; but the Lord hath ordered otherwise. He hath wiped out all his faults against the law; he hath fought for the honour of old England well; and he hath saved the life of my son Jack. Spite of all that, I might refuse to unspeak my words, which I never did afore, if it had not been that I have wronged the man. I have wronged the young fellow; and I am man enough to say so. I called him a murderer, and a sneak; and time hath proved me to have been a liar. Therefore, I ask his pardon humbly; and, what will be more to his liking perhaps, I say that he shall have my daughter Mary, if she abides agreeable. And I put down these here twenty guineas, for Mary to look as

she ought to look. She hath been a good lass, and hath borne with me better, than one in a thousand would have done. Mary, my love to you; and with leave all round, here's the very good health of Robin Lyth!"

"Here's the health of Robin Lyth!" shouted Mr. Popplewell, with his fat cheeks shining merrily; "hurrah for the lad, who saved Nelson's death from a Frenchman's grins, and saved our Jack boy! Stephen Anerley, I forgive you. This is the right stuff, and no mistake. Deborah, come, and kiss the farmer."

Mrs. Popplewell obeyed her husband, as the manner of good wives is. And over and above this fleeting joy, solid satisfaction entered into noble hearts, which felt that now the fruit of laborious years, and the cash of many a tanning season, should never depart from the family. And to make an end of any weak misgivings, even before the ladies went—to fill the pipes for the gentlemen—the tanner drew with equal care, and even better nerve, the second bottle's cork, and expressed himself as follows:—

"Brother Steve hath done the right thing. We hardly expected it of him; by rights of his confounded stubbornness. But when a shut-up man repenteth, he is equal to a hoyster,—or this here bottle. What good would this a' been, without it was sealed over? Now mark my words. I'll not be behind no man,

when it comes to the right side up. I may be a poor man, a very poor man; and people counting otherwise, might find themselves mistaken. I likes to be liked for myself only. But the day our Mary goes to church with Robin Lyth, she shall have 500*l.* tied upon her back; or else my name's not Popplewell."

Mary had left the room long ago, after giving her father a gentle kiss, and whispering to Willie, that he should have half of her twenty guineas for inventing things; which is a most expensive process, and should be more highly encouraged. Therefore, she could not express, at the moment, her gratitude to Squire Popplewell; but as soon as she heard of his generosity, it lifted a great weight off her mind, and enabled her to think about furnishing a cottage. But she never told even her mother of that. Perhaps Robin might have seen some one he liked better. Perhaps he might have heard that stupid story, about her having taken up with poor Harry Tanfield; and that might have driven him to wed a foreign lady, and therefore to fight so desperately. None, however, of these perhapses went very deeply into her heart; which was equally trusting and trusty.

Now some of her confidence in the future was justified, that very moment almost, by a sudden and great arrival, not of Jack Anerley and Robin Lyth (who were known to be coming

home together), but of a gentleman, whose skill, and activity, deserved all thanks, for every good thing that had happened.

"Well! I am in the very nick of time. It is my nature," cried Mr. Mordacks, seated in the best chair by the fire. "Why? you inquire, with your native penetration. Simply because in very early days I acquired the habit of punctuality. This holding good where an appointment is, holds good afterwards, from the force of habit, in matters that are of luck alone. The needle-eye of time gets accustomed to be hit, and turns itself up, without waiting for the clue. Wonderful Madeira! Well, Captain Anerley, no wonder that you have discouraged free trade, with your cellars full of this! It is twenty years, since I have tasted such wine. Mistress Anerley, I have the honour of quaffing this glass to your very best health, and that of a very charming young lady, who has hitherto failed to appreciate me."

"Then, sir, I am here to beg your pardon," said Mary, coming up, with a beautiful blush. "When I saw you first, I did not enter into your—your—"

"My outspoken manner, and short business style. But I hope that you have come to like me better. All good persons do, when they come to know me."

"Yes, sir; I was quite ashamed of myself, when I came to learn all that you have done

for somebody, and your wonderful kindness at Bridlington."

"Famously said! You inherit, from your mother, the power, and the charm of expression. And now, my dear lady, good Mistress Anerley, I shall undo all my great merits, by showing that I am like the letter-writers, who never write, until they have need of something. Captain Anerley, it concerns you also, as a military man, and loyal soldier of King George. A gallant young officer (highly distinguished in his own way, and very likely to get on, in virtue of high connexion) became of age, some few weeks back; and being the heir to large estates, determined to entail them. I speak, as in a parable. My meaning is one, which the ladies will gracefully enter into. Being a large heir, he is not selfish; but would fain share his blessings with a little one. In a word, he is to marry a very beautiful young lady, to-morrow, and under my agency. But he has a very delightful mother, and an aunt of a lofty and commanding mind; whose views, however, are comparatively narrow. For a hasty, brief season, they will be wroth; and it would be unjust, to be angry with them. But love's indignation is soon cured by absence; and tones down rapidly into desire to know how the sinner is getting on. In the present case, a fortnight will do the business; or if for a month, so much the better. Heroes are

in demand just now; and this young gentleman took such a scare, in his very first fight, that he became a hero; and so has behaved himself ever since. Ladies, I am astonished at your goodness, in not interrupting me! Your minds must be as practical as my own. Now this lovely young pair, being married to-morrow, will have to go hunting for the honey in the moon, to which such enterprises lead."

"Sir, you are very right," Squire Popplewell replied; and, "That is Bible truth," said the farmer.

"Our minds are enlarged by experience," resumed the genial factor pleasantly, and bowing to the ladies, who declined to say a word, until a better opportunity; "and we like to see the process going on with others. But a nest must be found for these young doves—a quiet one, a simple one, a place where they may learn to put up with one another's cookery. The secret of happiness, in this world, is not to be too particular. I have hit upon the very place, to make them thankful by-and-by, when they come to look back upon it—a sweet little hole, half a league away from anybody. All is arranged—a frying-pan, a brown-ware teapot, a skin of lard, a cock and a hen, to lay some eggs; a hundredweight of ship biscuits, warranted free from weevil; and a knife and fork. Also a way to the sea, and a net, for them to fish together.

Nothing more delightful can be imagined. Under such circumstances, they will settle, in three days, which is to be the master; which I take to be the most important of all marriage settlements. And, unless I am very much mistaken, it will be the right one—the lady. My little heroine, Jerry Carroway, is engaged as their factotum; and every auspice is favourable. But without your consent, all is knocked on the head; for the cottage is yours, and the tenant won't go out, even under temptation of five guineas, without your written order. Mistress Anerley, I appeal to you. Captain, say nothing. This is a lady's question."

"Then, I like to have a little voice sometimes; though it is not often that I get it. And, Mr. Mordacks, I say 'Yes.' And, out of the five guineas, we shall get our rent, or some of it perhaps, from Poacher Tim, who owes us nigh upon two years now."

The farmer smiled at his wife's good thrift, and being in a pleasant mood, consented; if so be the law could not be brought against him; and if the young couple would not stop too long, or have any family to fall upon the rates. The factor assured him against all evils; and then created quite a brisk sensation, by telling them, in strict confidence, that the young officer was one Lancelot Yordas, own first cousin to the famous Robin Lyth, and nephew to Sir Duncan Yordas. And the lady

was the daughter of Sir Duncan's oldest friend, the very one whose name he had given to his son. Wonder never ceased among them; when they thought how things came round.

Things came round, not only thus, but also even better, afterwards. Mordacks had a very beautiful revenge of laughter at old Jellicorse, by outstripping him vastly in the family affairs. But Mr. Jellicorse did not care; so long as he still had eleven boxes left of title-deeds to Scargate Hall, no liability about the twelfth, and a very fair prospect of a lawsuit yet, for the multiplication of the legal race. And meeting Mr. Mordacks, in the highest legal circles, at Proctor Brigant's, in Crypt Court, York, he acknowledged that he never met a more delightful gentleman—until he found out what his name was. And even then, he offered him a pinch of snuff; and they shook hands very warmly, without anything to pay.

When Robin Lyth came home, he was dissatisfied at first—so difficult is mankind to please—because his good luck had been too good. No scratch of steel, no permanent scorch of powder, was upon him; and England was not in the mood to value any unwounded valour. But even here, his good luck stood him in strong stead, and cured his wrong. For when the body of the lamented hero arrived at Spithead, in spirits of wine, early

in December, it was found that the Admiralty had failed to send down any orders about it. Reports, however, were current of some intention, that the hero should lie in state; and the battered ship went on with him. And when at last, proper care was shown, and the relics of one of the noblest men, that ever lived upon the tide of time, were being transferred to a yacht at the Nore, Robin Lyth, in a sad and angry mood, neglected to give a wide berth to a gun, that was helping to keep up the mourning salute, and a piece of wad carried off his starboard whisker.

This at once replaced him in the popular esteem, and enabled him to land upon the Yorkshire coast, with a certainty of glorious welcome. Mr. Mordacks himself came down to meet him, at the Northern Landing, with Dr. Uproud, and Robin Cockscroft, and nearly all the men, and entirely all the women, and children, of Little Denmark. Strangers also from outlandish parts, Squire Popplewell, and his wife, Deborah, Mrs. Carroway, (with her Tom, and Jerry, and Cissy, and lesser Carroways—for her old Aunt Jane was gone to Paradise at last, and had left her enough to keep a pony-carriage); and a great many others; and especially a group of four distinguished persons, who stood at the top of the slide, because of the trouble of getting back, if they went down.

These had a fair, and double-horsed, carriage in the lane, at the spot where fish face their last tribunal; and scarcely any brains, but those of Flamborough, could have absorbed such a spectacle as this, together with the deeper expectations from the sea. Of these four persons, two were young enough, and two not so young as they had been; but still very lively, and well pleased with one another. These were Mrs. Carnaby, and Mr. Bart; the pet of the one had united his lot with the darling of the other; for good, or for bad, there was no getting out of it; and the only thing was to make the best of it. And being good people, they were doing this successfully. Poor Mrs. Carnaby had said to Mr. Bart, as soon as Mr. Mordacks let her know about the wedding, "Oh, but Mr. Bart, you are a gentleman; now, are you not? I am sure you are; though you do such things! I am sure of it, by your countenance."

"Madam," Mr. Bart replied, with a bow that was decisive, "if I am not, it is my own fault; as it is the fault of every man."

At this present moment, they were standing with their children, Lancelot, and Insie, who had nicely recovered from matrimony, and began to be too high-spirited. They all knew, by virtue of Mr. Mordacks, who Robin Lyth was; and they wanted to see him, and be kind to him; if he made no claim upon

them. And Mr. Bart desired, as his father's friend, to shake hands with him, and help him, if help were needed.

But Robin, with a grace, and elegance, which he must have imported from foreign parts, declined all connexion and acquaintance with them, and declared his set resolve to have nothing to do with the name of "Yordas." They were grieved, as they honestly declared, to hear it; but could not help owning that his pride was just; and they felt that their name was the richer, for not having any poor people to share it.

Yet Captain Lyth—as he now was called, even by revenue officers—in no way impoverished his name, by taking another to share it with him. The farmer declared that there should be no wedding, until he had sold seven stacks of wheat; for his meaning was to do things well. But this obstacle did not last long; for those were times when corn was golden, not in landscape only.

So, when the spring was fair with promise, of green for the earth, and of blue for heaven, and of silver grey upon the sea, the little church, close to Anerley Farm, filled up all the complement of colours. There was scarlet, of Dr. Upround's hood (brought by the Precious boy from Flamborough), a rich plum colour, in the coat of Mordacks, delicate rose, and virgin white, in the blush and the brow of Mary, every tint of the rainbow on

her mother's part; and gold, rich gold, in a great tanned bag, on behalf of Squire Popplewell. His idea of a "settlement" was cash down; and he put it on the parish register.

Mary found no cause to repent of the long endurance of her truth, and the steadfast power of quiet love. Robin was often in the distance still, far beyond the silvery streak of England's new salvation. But Mary prayed for his safe return; and safe he was, by the will of the Lord, which helps the man who helps himself, and has made his hand bigger than his tongue. When the war was over, Captain Lyth came home; and trained his children in the ways in which he should have walked, and the duties they should do, and pay.

THE END.

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